# The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline



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**“Set in order the things that are wanting.”** *Titus 1:5*

**By**
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## PREFACE

THERE is a current saying (not Bible, as some have supposed), that “order is heaven’s first law.” The Scriptures, however, do state that the starry heavens “declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.” *Psalm 19:1*. The handiwork of the Lord is especially manifest in the precise circuit of the celestial bodies in their orbits. “Lift up your eyes on high,” saith the Lord, “and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.” *Isaiah 40:26*.*COOD 3.1*

So exact and certain are the planets in their courses that the variation of a minute in their return to a certain position in the heavens is not perceivable. This is verified by a statement made in an English translation of a French work on “God’s glorious creation,” by Harmon Kline and Thome, Vol. 1, page 22, where it is stated that “in two thousand years the day has only increased in length the eighty-third part of a second.” And that “observations made since 1850 show that the earth in its passage around the sun has gained only two seconds.”*COOD 3.2*

What a marvel of precision in the movements of the heavenly bodies is this, that the earth in its yearly journey around the sun, for about fifty consecutive years, at the rate of over two thousand miles a minute, has only gained two seconds in that fifty years.*COOD 3.3*

God’s order is not confined to the planets alone, for there is perfect order and system among the heavenly beings. We read of the angels that they “do his commandments, harkening unto the voice of his word.” *Psalm 103:20*. And they are “all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” *Hebrews 1:14*.*COOD 3.4*

“Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf.... Never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity,

disorganization, and disorder."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:649, 650*.*COOD 4.1*

In the following pages we have endeavored to show the position the Lord's church should occupy; the order and discipline which he has taught in his Word should prevail in the church, and how, in the rise of the cause of third angel's message, order was established among this people; that order of which we are told the Lord "wrought in the organization that has been *perfected."Christian Education, 136, edition of 1894*.*COOD 4.2*

Of this organization we read, "to provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying on the work in new fields, for protecting both the church and ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for other objects, organization was indispensable.-*Mrs. E. G. White, in General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 29, 1893*.*COOD 4.3*

We quote still further as the importance of order at the present time: "As we near the close of time, ... order must be observed, and there must be union in maintaining order, or Satan will take the advantage."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:210*.*COOD 4.4*

As to the present organization and its practical working, we find this statement: "The divisions of the General Conference into district union conferences was God's arrangement. In the work of the Lord for these last days, there should be no Jerusalem centers, no kingly power."-*Testimonies for the Church 8:233*.*COOD 4.5*

Again, "every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the State conferences. Delegates chosen by the State conferences choose the officers of the union conferences; and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference."-*Ibid., 236, 237*.*COOD 5.1*

We request a careful consideration of the facts introduced in the

following pages concerning that development of order among Seventh-day Adventists, which “set in order the things that are wanting,” at just such time as the necessity was seen, and which order has saved this cause from the confusion Satan otherwise would have produced among the people; and which confusion would now soon appear should the Lord’s “established” and “perfected” order be disregarded. J. N. LOUGHBOROUGH *Mountain View, Cal., April 1, 1906.*COOD 5.2

## 01 ITS FOUNDATION

“Upon this Rock I will build by church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” *Matthew 16:18*.*COOD 7.1*

The church of Christ is called a building. As it is essential to the security and permanence of a building that it have a firm foundation, so of this spiritual temple the Lord says: “Behold, I lay in Zion for a *foundation* a *stone*, a tried stone, a precious *corner stone*, a sure foundation.” *Isaiah 28:16*. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, said, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” *1 Corinthians 3:11*.*COOD 7.2*

Our Saviour said of the true character building in his church, “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house on a *rock*: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a *rock*.” *Luke 6:46-48*. In the Ephesian letter, Paul writes: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.” *Ephesians 2:19, 20*.*COOD 7.3*

**Christ the Rock**

We will notice a few of the many scriptures in which Christ is spoken as the *rock*: “I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the *rock*, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” *Deuteronomy 32:3, 4*. “Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.” *Verse 18*. “Their *rock* is not as our *Rock*, even our enemies themselves being judges.” *Verse 31*. The inspired words of Hannah, after the birth of Samuel, are of the same import: “There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any *rock* like our God.” *1 Samuel 2:2*. So are the words of David, when delivered “out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:” “And he said, the Lord is my *rock*, and my fortress, and my deliverer.” “For who is God, save the Lord” And who is a *Rock*, save our God?” *2 Samuel 2:2, 32*. Still further, “he only is my *rock* and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.” *Psalm 62:2*.*COOD 7.4*

**Christ the Tried Stone**

Christ is not only called the *rock*, but he is also called the *tried stone*. We read: “I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The *stone* which the builders refused is become the *head-stone* of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” *Psalm 118:21-23*. Inspired comment is given on this text in the New Testament in our Saviour’s parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen: “Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard unto others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid. And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The *stone* which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that *stone* shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” *Luke 20:13-18*.*COOD 8.1*

Should any doubt remain in the mind of any that this stone refers to Christ, assurance is made doubly sure by the words of Peter before the rulers, elders, and priests in Jerusalem: “If we this day be examined of the good deed to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the *stone* which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” *Acts 4:9-12*.*COOD 9.1*

**Christ the Foundation of the Church**

“The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon men, nor be controlled by men. Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction. The Saviour declares, ‘All ye are brethren.’ All are exposed to temptation, and are liable to err. Upon no finite being can we depend for guidance. The *rock* of faith is the living presence of Christ in the church. Upon this the weakest may depend, and those who think themselves the strongest will prove to be the weakest, unless they make Christ their efficiency. ‘Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.’ The Lord is ‘the Rock, his work is perfect,’ ‘blessed are all they that put their trust in him.’”-*The Desire of Ages, 491*.*COOD 9.2*

**The Spiritual House**

We read in Peter's first epistle of the foundation stone and the building upon it: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the *stone* which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." *1 Peter 2:1-8*.*COOD 10.1*

**True Mode of Building**

In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul shows us the proper mode of building upon the foundation: “For we are laborers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of that sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” *1 Corinthians 3:9-15*.*COOD 10.2*

**Saved as by Fire**

I n *Testimonies for the Church 3:165*, we have the following reference to this text: “But God is all-pitiful, gracious, and tender, and when light come to those who have injured their health by sinful indulgences, and they are convinced of sin, and repent and seek pardon, he accepts the poor offering rendered to him, and receives them. Oh, what tender mercy that he does not refuse the remnant of the abused life of the suffering, repentant sinner! In his gracious mercy, he saves these souls as by fire. But what an inferior, pitiful sacrifice at best, to offer to a pure and holy God! Noble faculties have been paralyzed by wrong habits of sinful indulgence. The aspirations are perverted, and the soul and body defaced.”*COOD 11.1*

**The Wilderness Church**

Paul in writing of the work accomplished for the upbuilding of the Israelitish church in the wilderness, said: “All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual *Rock* that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” *1 Corinthians 10:1-4*.*COOD 11.2*

Those who accept Christ as the *rock*, and feast upon his Word as the true meat and drink,-these are building upon a firm foundation, and can indeed sing,-“On Christ, the solid *rock*, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.”*COOD 11.3*

## 02 THE CHURCH AS A BUILDING

CHRIST is presented in the Scriptures as the*foundation stone* upon which all true faith and hope are built. His church is called a building, erected upon this solid basis. In these words we read the Lord's prediction concerning the security of the work: Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a *tried* stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." *Isaiah 28:16*. One reason assigned for the surety of the stone is the fact that it has been tested, as seen by reading the following stirring words:*COOD 12.1*

**The Tried Stone**

"Our Redeemer is a *'tried stone.'* The experiment has been made, the great test has been applied, and with perfect success. In him is fulfilled all the purpose of God for the saving of a lost world. Never was a foundation subject to so severe a trial and test as this *'Tried Stone.'* The Lord Jehovah knew that this foundation stone could sustain. The sins of the whole could be piled upon it. The Lord's chosen were to be revealed, heaven's gates to be thrown open to all who would believe; its untold glories were to be given to the overcomers.*COOD 12.2*

"A 'Tried Stone' is Christ, tried by the perversity of man. Thou, O our Saviour, has taken the burden; thou has given peace and rest; thou has been tried, proved, by believers who have taken their trials to thy sympathy, their sorrows to thy love, their wounds to thy healing, their weakness to strength, their emptiness to thy fulness; and never, never, has one soul been disappointed. Jesus, my Tried Stone, to thee will I come, moment by moment. In thy presence I am lifted above pain. 'When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I....'*COOD 12.3*

"We are to be sons and daughters of God, growing into a holy temple in the Lord. 'No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.... Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.' This is our privilege. How is heaven amazed at the present condition of the church that could be so much to the world were every stone, in its proper place, a living stone to emit light. The stone that does not shine is worthless. That which constitutes the value of our churches in not dead, lusterless stones; but living stones, stones that catch the bright beams for the chief corner-stone, even from the sun of righteousness,-the bright glory in which are combined the beams of mercy and truth, that have met together, of righteousness and peace that have kissed each other."-*Mrs. E. G. White, in Review of March 19, 1895COOD 12.4*

**The Spiritual House**

The apostle Peter, in speaking of the Lord's church as a building, says: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." *1 Peter 2:3-5*. These sacrifices are not animal flesh, as in the Levitical priesthood; but, as expressed by Paul: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." *Romans 12:1*. David plainly states the sacrifice that is acceptable with God, when he says: "Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." *Psalm 51:16, 17*.*COOD 13.1*

**The Stones Tested**

In the building of this spiritual house mentioned by the apostle Peter, the people of God composing the structure are represented as *lively*, or *living stones*. What a work to be accomplished in these stones, quarried from rock of the enemy, before they can be fitly called the *lively stones* in God's house. We are exhorted to "look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." *Isaiah 51:1*. The Lord says of his dealing with these rough stones: "Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth." *Hosea 6:5*. Like the tried stone in the foundation, those placed in the building must be tried stones. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." *Daniel 12:10*.*COOD 13.2*

Of this testing process we read in the epistle of James, "Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation: for when he is *tried*, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." *James 1:12*. The same experience is referred to in Peter's first epistle, in these words: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." *1 Peter 5:10*. In the letter to the Hebrews the apostle said: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." *Hebrews 12:11*. This peaceable condition of mind is undoubtedly when they come forth from the Lord's training, "as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." *Psalm 144:12*.*COOD 14.1*

**God's House**

There are many scriptures in which the Lord's people are called a house, but we will refer to a few only: "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his [God's] house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose *house* are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." *Hebrews 3:4-6*. "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's *building*." "Know ye not that ye are the *temple* of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the *temple* of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." *1 Corinthians 3:9, 16, 17*. Again we read: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the *house* of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." *1 Timothy 3:14, 15*.*COOD 14.2*

In the Ephesian letter Paul speaks of the Lord's house on this wise: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." *Ephesians 2:19-22*.*COOD 15.1*

**The Church to Shine**

“The followers of Christ are to be coworkers with their Master; they must be ‘blameless, and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom,’ says Paul, ‘ye shine as lights in the world.’ We are to receive the bright beams from the Sun of Righteousness, and by our good works let them shine forth to others in clear, steady rays, never fitful, never growing dim. We can not be sure that we are doing no harm to those about us, unless we are exerting a positive influence to lead them heavenward.*COOD 15.2*

“‘Ye are my witnesses,’ said Jesus, and in each act of our lives we should inquire, how will our course affect the interests of the Redeemer’s kingdom? If you are indeed Christ’s disciple, you will chose to walk in his footsteps, however painful this way may be to your natural feelings. Said Paul,‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ You,-need to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him, as did Mary of old. God requires of you an entire surrender of your will, your plans, and purposes. Jesus is your leader; to him you must look, in him you must trust, and must permit nothing to deter you form the life of consecration which you owe to God. Your conversation must be in heaven, from whence you look for the Saviour. Your piety must be of a character to make itself felt by all within the sphere of your influence. God requires you in every act of life to shun the very appearance of evil.”-Testimonies for the Church,” No.32, pages 122, 123; *Vol. V, pages 366, 367*.*COOD 15.3*

A church with members heeding these words will be found “fitly framed together,” with its members living stones, emitting the light received from Christ, the rock of their strength. They are the temple of the living God, the house of God, where his Spirit will delight to take up its continual abode.*COOD 16.1*

## 03 THE HEAD AND THE BODY

“Let no man beguile you of your reward.... Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.” *Colossians 2:18, 19*.*COOD 17.1*

The body referred to in the text is the church of Christ, of which he is the *head*. In this same epistle the apostle says: “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in *one body*; and be ye thankful.” *Colossians 3:15*. In addressing the Romans he said: “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are *one body* in Christ, and every one members one of another.” *Romans 12:4, 5*. In the Ephesian letter he says: “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the *head* over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” *Ephesians 1:22, 23*.*COOD 17.2*

**The Church Christ's Body**

Again we read of Christ, "And he is the *head* of the *body*, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." *Colossians 1:17, 18*. Of Christ's body it was said to the Ephesians: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the *head*, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the *body* unto the edifying of itself in love." *Ephesians 4:15, 16*.*COOD 17.3*

We read in the Corinthian letter: "For as the *body* is one, and hath many members, and the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into *one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into *one spirit*. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? and if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body: is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.... Now ye are the *body of Christ*, and members in particular." *1 Corinthians 12:12-27*.*COOD 17.4*

**Union with Christ**

Paul illustrates the union that should exist in the church, by the *oneness* of the twain belonging to the marriage relation. He says, “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the *head* of the *church*: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.... We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” *Ephesians 5:23, 30*.*COOD 18.1*

**Christ Suffers with the Church**

So close is the union between Christ and his church that he recognizes their sufferings as his own. He is “touched with the *feeling* of our infirmities.” *Hebrews 4:15*. Paul spoke of his sufferings for the church as filling “up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” *Colossians 1:24*. Again we read, “Blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.” *2 Corinthians 1:3-5*. The apostle expressed a desire to not only know Christ, but to know also “the power of his resurrection, and fellowship of his sufferings.” *Philippians 3:10*.*COOD 18.2*

**True Fellowship**

The true basis of fellowship is with the Father and the Son. This is plainly stated by the Apostle John in his first epistle: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.... If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” *1 John 1:3-7*. Joyous and blessed assurance indeed,-fellowship with God and Christ, and that we may know, as expressed by the Spirit in the instruction to his people, that “the church, enfeebled and defective, needing to reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows his supreme regard.”-*The Review and Herald, September 5, 1893*.*COOD 19.1*

**Divinity and Humanity**

“He in whom ‘dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily,’ descended to our world, humiliated himself by clothing his divinity with humanity, that through humanity he might reach the human family. While he embraced the human race with his human arm, he grasped the throne of God with his divine arm, thus uniting humanity to divinity. The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, descended the path of humiliation step by step until he reached the lowest point possible for humanity to experience; and why?-that he might be able to reach even the lowest of mankind, sunken in the very depths of degradation though they be, that he might be able to elevate them to the heights of heaven.”-*The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895*.*COOD 19.2*

**God and I**

“The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows, and even by our utterance of them. Take to him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for him to bear; for he holds up worlds, he rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that concerns in any way our peace is too small for him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience to dark for him to read; there is no perplexity too deep for him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of his children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our Heavenly Father is unobservant, of in which he takes no immediate interest. ‘He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.’ The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul for whom he gave his beloved Son.*COOD 20.1*

“Every believer should be whole-hearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest, and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it in preference to himself, it can do far better without him. It is in the power of all to do something for the cause of God. There are those who spend a large amount for needless luxuries; they gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church.*COOD 20.2*

They are willing to receive all the benefits of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills. Those who really feel a deep interest in the advancement of the cause will not hesitate to invest money in the enterprise wherever and whenever it is needed. They should also feel it a solemn duty to illustrate in their characters the teachings of Christ, being at peace one with another, and moving in perfect harmony as an individual whole. They should defer their individual judgment to the judgment of the body of the church. Many live for themselves alone. They look upon their lives with great complacency, flattering themselves that they are blameless, when, in fact, they are doing nothing for God, and are living in direct opposition to his expressed word.”-*Testimonies for the Church 4:18*.*COOD 21.1*

## 04 THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great *shepherd* of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever, amen.” *Hebrews 13:20, 21*.*COOD 22.1*

There are many texts in the Scriptures in which the Lord beautifully compares his people to sheep, needing and receiving the tender care of the great Shepherd; but we will notice in this connection a few only: “He is our God; and we are the people of his pasture and the *sheep* of his hand.” *Psalm 95:7*; *79:13*; *100:3*. “Thou leddest thy people like a *flock* by the hand of Moses and Aaron.” *Psalm 77:20*. “Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that leddest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth.” *Psalm 80:1*. Feed thy people with thy rod, the *flock* of thine heritage, which dwell solitary in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.: *Micah 7:14*.*COOD 22.2*

Not only has the Lord called his people sheep, but *wandering* and *lost sheep*: “My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place.” *Jeremiah 50:6*. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all.” *Isaiah 53:6*: “I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant.” *Psalm 119:176*. “Mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord’s *flock* is carried away captive.... Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where is the *flock* that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” *Jeremiah 13:20*.*COOD 22.3*

**Seeking the Lost Sheep**

Some light is shed upon this question in *Ezekiel 34:11-22, 31*, where the prophet says: “For thus saith the Lord God; behold, I, even I, will both search my *sheep*, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, will deliver them out of all places where they have been *scattered* in the cloudy and dark day.... I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was *driven away*, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was *sick*; but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.... Because ye have *thrust* with side and with shoulder, and *pushed* all the diseased with your horns, till ye have *scattered* them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey.... And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.”*COOD 23.1*

**The Shepherd of Our Souls**

The apostle Peter says of those accepting the loving care of the true Shepherd: “Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” *1 Peter 2:25*. We can say with the Psalmist when considering the tender care of the Great Shepherd: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” *Psalm 23:1, 2*. The manner in which he will do this is stated in these words: “Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him, behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” *Isaiah 40:10, 11*. Again, “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, he that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.” *Jeremiah 31:10*.*COOD 23.2*

Of the Lord’s dealing with his flock when oppressed, we read, “As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch.” *Amos 3:12*. Though the Lord’s people be surrounded by unbelief, and be subject to oppression, his comforting word comes: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” *Luke 12:32*.*COOD 24.1*

## Christ and His Flock

Most strikingly is the relation of Christ to his flock set forth in John's record of the Saviour's teaching: "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and they might have it more abudantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am know of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of fold: them also I must bring, and shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." *John 10:7-16*.*COOD 24.2*

**Close Relationship**

The close relationship between Christ and his flock is seen in these words: “He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice [“leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps.” *1 Peter 2:21*], and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him for they know not the voice of strangers.” *John 10:3-5*.*COOD 25.1*

## 05 THE UNDER SHEPHERDS AND THE FLOCK

“BEHOLD, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” *Matthew 10:16*.*COOD 26.1*

When our Saviour left the world, intrusting his people to the care of his ministers, they had the example of the great Shepherd before them; and with the aid of the Spirit promised for their guidance, he expected them to imitate their Master in tenderly caring for the flock. In his interview with the apostles, after his resurrection, he said to Peter, when repeating the inquiry, “Lovest thou me?” “Feed my sheep;” “Feed my lambs.”*COOD 26.2*

**The True Shepherd's Care**

The tender regard of the great Shepherd for his flock is expressed in these words: "Let us remember that Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows the wants of each of his creatures, and reads the hidden, unspoken grief of every heart. If one of the little ones for whom he died is injured, he sees it, and calls the offender to account. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He cares for his feeble, sickly, wandering sheep. He knows them all by name. The distress of every sheep and every lamb of his flock touches his heart of sympathizing love, and the cry for aid reaches his ear. One of the greatest sins of the shepherds of Israel is thus pointed out by the prophet: 'The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.' Jesus cares for each one as though there were not another individual on the face of the earth. As Deity, he exerts mighty power in our behalf, while as our Elder Brother he feels for all our woes."-*"Testimonies for the Church," No. 32, page 102.*COOD 26.3

**Feed the Flock**

The apostle Peter, in carrying out the instruction of the Master, gave the following counsel to his associate ministers: “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” *1 Peter 5:1-4*.*COOD 27.1*

Paul, in his farewell personal testimony to the elders of the Ephesian church, who met him at Miletus, said: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” *Acts 20:28, 29*. So confident was the apostle that his life labors had been not of himself, but of Christ dwelling within him, that he could commend his life as a sample of labor, saying, “Be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for and ensample.” *Philippians 3:17*.*COOD 27.2*

**A Worthy Example**

The kind of ensample which Paul commends is quite fully set forth in his epistle to the church in Thessalonica: “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything.” *1 Thessalonians 1:6-8*. The manner in which they received the word from the lips of the apostle is also stated: “For,” said he, “when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” *1 Thessalonians 2:13*.*COOD 27.3*

Referring to the character of his example which he set for them, he says: “For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet others, whom we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children! So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.” *1 Thessalonians 2:5-8*.*COOD 28.1*

**Seeking Their Own**

Leaders of the same character he commends to the Philippian church, of whom he says: “I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Christ’s. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the Father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.” *Philippians 2:19-30*.*COOD 28.2*

**Care for the Feeble**

The same tender care should be in the church to-day as is seen in the following words: “The true brethren of Christ are those who guard the interests of their brethren and sisters. How inappropriate it is to condemn others, when every soul is to be saved, not on his own merits, but by the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour! We are all erring, finite creatures, accountable to God for our words, works, and influence....*COOD 29.1*

“Deal tenderly and graciously with every soul, and especially deal tenderly with those who are liable to err. They, of all others, need your help the most. Never take up a report against a brother or a neighbor, or harbor evil surmisings against him. ‘Thou shalt not imagine evil in thy heart against thy brother....’*COOD 29.2*

“Instead of looking for the faults of our brother, let us seek for every redeeming quality, obtain his confidence, come close to the one who needs his hands upheld, his feeble knees strengthened. Let us, brethren, make straight paths for our feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way....*COOD 29.3*

“As mature Christians we shall love more and more, not less and less. We need the warmth and glow of Christ in our cold, stony hearts. We want our hearts broken by the love of Christ, and then we shall defend the characters of those who are giving their lives to the service of him who has died for them.”-*The Review and Herald, October 24, 1893*.*COOD 29.4*

In special Testimonies to the Lord’s people at this time we read: “Find the erring, discouraged ones by careful, diligent search, and bring them back to the fold. Christ has said,‘By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’ Strive to have a real connection with Christ, and become laborers together with God. ‘Ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.’ Work with self hidden in Jesus, and the Lord will add to the church such as shall be saved. The great Master Shepherd will give wisdom to the under shepherds, that they may become living, working agents for his use. Let them not seek to exalt themselves, but to lift up Jesus; then they may go in and out and find pasture....*COOD 30.1*

“God can not commit his sheep and lambs to the care of a church who make it manifest that they have no aptitude or wisdom to care for the flock of his pasture....*COOD 30.2*

“Sinful and worthless creatures though we are, through a vital connection with Christ we yet may be renewed in knowledge and true holiness, and thus reflect the glory and image of our Creator and Redeemer, and be qualified to care for his sheep and lambs.”-*The Review and Herald, October 24, 1893*.*COOD 30.3*

## 06 THE VINE AND ITS BRANCHES

"I HAD planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" *Jeremiah 2:21*.*COOD 31.1*

The Lord compares is church-his people-to a vine, in which each member draws its life and nourishment from the parent stock. In the beautiful comparison drawn by the prophet Isaiah we read: "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" *Isaiah 5:1-4*.*COOD 31.2*

If we read still further, we learn why the fruit was evil instead of good: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." *Verse 7*.*COOD 31.3*

Concerning the Lord's vineyard and his care of it, the same prophet say: "In that day sing ye unto her, a *vineyard* of red wine [not a cellar of wine casks, but a vineyard, where it is 'wine in the cluster,' as in *Isaiah 65:8*]. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." *Isaiah 27:2, 3*.*COOD 31.4*

More fully still is this comparison of Christ and his church with the vineyard and its branches illustrated in our Saviour's discourse: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it ['pruneth it'], that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of

itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." *John 15:1-8*.*COOD 31.5*

**The Branches and the Vine**

“This chapter is simple in its illustrations, and is one that all may understand. Christ is ever seeking to present before his followers the privileges that are offered to sinful, feeble humanity. He would teach them that only through him can it be restored to healthful growth. We are to bear in mind that the branches in the true vine are the believers, who are brought into oneness by connection with the vine....*COOD 32.1*

“The branches of the vine can not blend into each other; they are individually separate; yet every branch must be in fellowship with every other if they are united in the same parent stock. They all draw nourishment from the same source; they drink in the same life-giving properties. So each branch of the True Vine is separate and distinct, yet all are bound together in the parent stock. There can be no division. They are all linked together by his will to bear fruit wherever they can find place and opportunity. But in order to do this, the worker must hide self. He must not give expression to his own mind and will. He is to express the mind and will of Christ. The human family are dependent upon God for life and breath and sustenance. God has designed the web, and all are individual threads to compose the pattern. The Creator is one, and he reveals himself as the great reservoir of all that is essential for each separate life.*COOD 32.2*

“Christian unity consists in the branches being in the same parent stock, the vitalizing power of the center supporting the grafts that have united to the vine. In thoughts and desires, in words and actions, there must be an identity with Christ, a constant partaking of his spiritual life.”-*The Review and Herald, November 9, 1897*.*COOD 33.1*

**Branches Supported by the Vine**

“The branches do not sustain the vine, but the vine supports and nourishes the branches. The church does not support Christ, but Christ, by his vital power, supports the church. It is not enough to be a branch; we are to be fruitful branches. ‘He that abideth in me,’ said Jesus, ‘and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.’ But if the fruit produced be that of the thorn bush, it is evident that we are not branches of the Living Vine.*COOD 33.2*

“Life is disciplinary. While in the world, the Christian will meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If injuries and insults are meekly borne, if insulting words are responded to by gentle answers, and oppressive acts by kindness, this is evidence that the spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, that sap from the Living Vine is flowing to the branches. We are in the school of Christ in this life, where we are to learn to be meek and lowly of heart; and in the day of final accounts we shall see that all the obstacles we meet, all the hardships and annoyances that we are called to bear, are practical lessons in the application of the principles of Christian life. If well endured, they develop the Christlike in the character, and distinguish the Christian from the worldling.*COOD 33.3*

“There is a high standard to which we are to attain if we would be children of God, noble, pure, holy, and undefiled; and a pruning process is necessary if we would reach this standard. How would this pruning be accomplished if there were no difficulties to meet, no obstacles to surmount, nothing to call out patience and endurance? These trials are not the smallest blessings in our experience. They are designed to nerve us to determination to succeed. We are to use them as God’s means to gain decided victories over self, instead of allowing them to hinder, oppress, and destroy us.*COOD 34.1*

“Character will be tested. Christ will be revealed in us if we are indeed branches of the Living Vine. We shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful amid frets and irritations. Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self and grow into a noble heroism. This is

our allotted task; but it can not be accomplished without continual help from Jesus, resolute decision, unwavering purpose, continual watchfulness, and unceasing prayer. Each one has a personal battle to fight. Each must win his own way through struggles and discouragements. Those who decline the struggle lose the strength and joy of victory. No one, not even God, can carry us to heaven unless we make the necessary effort on our part. We must put features of beauty into our lives. We must expel the unlovely natural traits that make us unlike Jesus. While God works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, we must work in harmony with him. The religion of Christ transforms the heart."-*"Testimonies for the Church," No. 32, pages 100, 101.*COOD 34.2

**Test of Character**

“The fruit we bear is the only test of the character of the tree before the world. This is the proof of our discipleship. If our works are of such a character that as branches of the Living Vine we bear rich clusters of precious fruit, then we wear before the world God’s own badge as his sons and daughters. We are living epistles known and read of all men.” - *Ibid., page 104.*COOD 35.1

## 07 THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

“CHRIST also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” *Ephesians 5:25-27*.*COOD 36.1*

Christ said of his church, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill can not be hid.... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is heaven.” *Matthew 5:14-16*. That this purpose might be accomplished in his people was the burden of that memorable prayer of our Lord just before his betrayal: “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may *know* that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” *John 17:22, 23*.*COOD 36.2*

Those professing to be Christians are an example of what should be manifested if the “meekness and gentleness of Christ” is really in them. Of one company thus consecrated to God the apostle said, “Ye are our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men.” *2 Corinthians 3:2*. It is to this high and holy work of letting the character of Christ be wrought in us that we are called; for, says the apostle, “ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people [a purchased people, margin]: that ye should show forth the praises [virtues, margin] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” *1 Peter 2:9*. That this might be accomplished, “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” *Verses 21-23*.*COOD 36.3*

In the lives of those in whom Christ is thus working will be seen “bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel [complaint, margin] against any: even as

Christ forgave you, so also do ye." *Colossians 3:12, 13*.*COOD 37.1*

When Christ thus dwells in the heart it will be easy to heed Paul's exhortation: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." *Ephesians 4:31, 32*.*COOD 37.2*

**Seek Unity**

How else could it be known that the heart is imbued with that first fruit of the Spirit, “charity”-love-that “suffereth long, and is kind; ... seeketh not her own, is easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (*1 Corinthians 13:4, 5*), if it be not that the person heeds the instruction to “speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.” *Titus 3:2*. And again, “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 2:3-5*. “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.” “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” *Romans 12:10, 18*.*COOD 37.3*

Those who are seeking by the grace of God to live in harmony with these scriptures will be better prepared to adopt the following divine instructions: “Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.” *Romans 12:16*. “Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.” *1 Peter 3:8, 9*. “All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” *1 Peter 5:5*. “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” *1 Corinthians 1:10*.*COOD 37.4*

It is “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” *Matthew 12:34*. In order to have the mind and word right toward the brethren, there must be other and better food for thought than their supposed failings. The apostle has given us a grand lesson on this point in the following text: “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of

good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." *Philippians 4:8*.*COOD 38.1*

**Passion a Denial of Christ**

In direct harmony with this we read in the Testimonies of the Spirit of God: “To be a Christian means culture after the divine character of Christ. That mind which was in Christ Jesus can not be correctly represented by untrained powers, which result in an unfurnished mind.... Passion manifested by a professed Christian is a denial of Christ; it gives victory to Satan, and enthrones him in the heart. Such a man gives testimony to the world that Satan has more power over him than has Christ. His words, spirit, and character testify that the molding and fashioning hand of Satan is upon him, making of him a vessel that will dishonor God....*COOD 38.2*

“We are here on probation, in training for the higher life. All heaven is waiting to co-operate with those who will be subordinate to the ways and will of God. God gives grace, and he expects all to use it. He supplies the power if the human mind feels any need or any disposition to receive. He never asks us to do anything without supplying the grace and power to do that very thing. All his biddings are enablings.... Evil passions, envy, evil surmisings, jealousy, accusing of the brethren, can not be indulged without denying Christ.”-*The Review and Herald, November 9, 1897*.*COOD 39.1*

## 08 RULERS

“OBEY them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” *Hebrews 13:17*.*COOD 40.1*

It is evident, not only from the connection in which this language is found, but also from the words of the text, that the *rulers* here spoken of are rulers in the church. Civil rulers have to do with temporal affairs and men’s bodies; but the rulers here mentioned are engaged in carefully caring for the souls of those whom they rule. These same *rulers* are thus mentioned in the former part of this chapter: “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever.” *Hebrews 13:7, 8*. It seems that these rulers were those who had taught them the word of God, and that submitting to the ruling was obeying that word.*COOD 40.2*

The charge the Lord made anciently against those shepherds of Israel who should have tenderly cared for his flock but did not, was this: “Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with *force* and with *cruelty* have ye *ruled them*.” *Ezekiel 34:3, 4*.*COOD 40.3*

**Church Rulers Should be Examples**

Even in the days of the apostles there were rulers who sought to oppress the church. The beloved apostle John makes mention of such an one in the person of “Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them.... Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out the church.” *3 John 9, 10*.*COOD 40.4*

To guard against such ruling in the church, the apostle Peter wrote to the ruling elders in his time: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” *1 Peter 5:2, 3*.*COOD 41.1*

Paul spoke of that class of faithful rulers on this wise: “Let the elders that *rule well* be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” *1 Timothy 5:17-19*.*COOD 41.2*

In this same epistle the apostle, speaking of the qualifications of a bishop (the same office as a ruling elder at that time), says, “One that *ruleth well* his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God)?” *1 Timothy 3:4, 5*.*COOD 41.3*

**Church Rulers be Gentle**

One very essential feature in proper family government or ruling is presented in the case of Abraham, of whom the Lord said: “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.” *Genesis 18:19*. In the case of Eli, who failed in his government, the Lord said: “I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he *restrained* them not.” *1 Samuel 3:13*.*COOD 41.4*

The course to be pursued by the one chosen to lead or govern a church is found in these words: “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” *2 Timothy 2:24, 25*.*COOD 42.1*

A church ruler with grace to pursue such a course will not, Pharisaically, “bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders” (*Matthew 23:4*), saying *“do this,“* and *“go there;”* but rather, being himself an example of what should be done, will lead the flock with the persuasive “come on.” For such a course he has the example of Christ: “when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” *John 10:4, 27*.*COOD 42.2*

The proper ruling of the Lord’s people is stated by the Spirit, through David, in these words: “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.” *2 Samuel 23:3, 4*. That portion of David’s reign thus characterized, led him to say: “Thou has also given me the shield of thy salvation.... And *thy gentleness* hath made me great.” *Psalm 18:35*.*COOD 42.3*

**Proper Church Ruling**

In the Testimonies the Lord shows the evils of a wrong course of ruling, and also the right way to rule, or govern: “The worst of it is that often those who ought to understand why such action is out of place, drink in the spirit of the accuser, go to the polluted fountain of suspicion and distrust, and turning from the course justice marks out, are guided by some one’s hearsay of another’s action or character.... Are we to take reports, hearsay, as if they were verity and truth? Are we not to rebuke the talebearer who would make a condemned brother’s course appear as bad as possible.... No one can do the work of reproving and counseling in the way that Christ would have done it, whose heart is not filled with peace and love.”-*The Review and Herald, October 24, 1893*.*COOD 42.4*

“Those who lead out for others to follow must be sure that they are not leading the people to a low standard, by their own want of the power of true godliness. Jesus will not excuse, in those who should be patterns of piety, a cold, loveless religion. He wants you to cultivate a great deal more love and humility. Pray much, and believe much, and frame your conversation so that you will lead the minds of others to devotion, to spirituality,-away from criticism, away from severity,-and to love and respect one another, to true courtesy. Express affection. Express sympathy, and draw close to the bleeding side of Jesus.”-*Unpublished Testimony, July 6, 1886*.*COOD 43.1*

If the rulers in the church have hearts filled with such a spirit, their counsels, like that of John, will ever be of the nature of his loving words, “little children, love one another.”*COOD 43.2*

## 09 REBUKING SIN

“THERE are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore *rebuke* them *sharply*, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.” *Titus 1:10-14*.*COOD 44.1*

It may be asked, does not this testimony show that the servants of the Lord are to use *sharp* rebukes, and that they are not always to be as tender as before stated? We answer: The rebuke here spoken of by the apostle does not give license to sharp words proceeding from the carnal heart, but in using the truth of God deftly and pointedly in exposing errors.*COOD 44.2*

This thought is again expressed in the same epistle, where, after speaking of our Saviour Jesus Christ, “who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,” the apostle says: “These things speak, and exhort, and *rebuke* with all authority.” *Titus 2:14, 15*. The rebuking is the exposing of sin, iniquity, and all departures from Christ, not with human zeal and words of man’s devising, but by teaching “these things”-the plain truths of the gospel.*COOD 44.3*

This is again seen in Paul’s solemn charge to the ministry, as given to Timothy, where he says: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.... I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, *rebuke*, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.” *2 Timothy 3:16, 17*; *4:1, 2*.*COOD 44.4*

This is in perfect accord with what he had taught in his first epistle to Timothy, where he says: “Them that sin rebuke before all, that

others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, do nothing by partiality." *1 Timothy 5:20, 21*.*COOD 45.1*

**How to Deal with the Erring**

“With tender compassion should brother deal with brother. Delicately should he deal with feelings. It is the nicest and most important work that ever yet was done to touch the wrongs of another. With the deepest humility should a brother do this, considering his own weakness, lest he also should be tempted....*COOD 45.2*

“Said Jesus, ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ Do you feel, when a brother errs, that you could give your life to save him? If you feel thus, you can approach him and affect his heart; you are just the one to visit that brother. But it is a lamentable fact that many who profess to be brethren are not willing to sacrifice any of their opinions or their judgment to save a brother.”-*Testimonies for the Church 1:166*.*COOD 45.3*

**Facts Not to be Harshly Spoken**

“Frequently the truth and the facts are to be plainly spoken to the erring, to make them see and feel their error that they may reform. But this should ever be done with pitying tenderness, not with harshness or severity, but considering one’s own weakness, lest he also be tempted. When the one at fault sees and acknowledges his error, then, instead of grieving him, and seeking to make him feel more deeply, comfort should be given. In the sermon of Christ upon the Mount, he said, ‘Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.’ Our Saviour reproved for rash judgment. ‘Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye; and behold a beam is in thine own eye?’ It is frequently the case that while one is quick to discern the errors of his brethren, he may be in greater faults himself, but be blind to them.”-*Ibid., Vol. III, 93*.*COOD 45.4*

“The Lord would teach his servants great carefulness in all their motives. ‘Let both grow together.’ Do not forcibly pull up the tares, lest in rooting them up, the precious blades will become loosened. Both ministers and church-members should be very cautious, lest they get a zeal not according to knowledge. There is danger of doing too much to cure difficulties in the church, which if left alone, will frequently work their own cure. It is bad policy to take hold of matters in any church prematurely. We shall have to exercise the greatest care, patience, and self-control, to bear these things, and not go to work in our own spirit to set them in order.”-*Ibid., 113, 114*.*COOD 46.1*

“We are not to bruise the souls of the erring, but to go them armed with humility and prayer. When the gospel minister, with his heart subdued by the love and grace of Christ, comes in touch with human minds, he can reveal his superior qualifications, not by destroying hope and courage, but by inspiring faith in the faithless, by lifting up the hands that hang down, and confirming the feeble knees.”-*The Review and Herald, November 21, 1899*.*COOD 46.2*

**Not to Shun Giving Correction**

“There will ever be a spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But shall the voice of reproof be hushed because of this? If so, we shall be in no better situation than are the various denominations in our land, who are afraid to touch the errors and prevailing sins of the people....*COOD 46.3*

“There are ever those who will despise the one who dares to reprove sin; but there are times when reproof must be given. Paul directs Titus to rebuke a certain class sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Men and women, who, with their different organizations, are brought together in church capacity, have peculiarities and faults. As these are developed, they will require reproof. If those who are placed in important positions are never reproved, never rebuked, there would soon be a demoralized condition of things that would greatly dishonor God. But how shall the reproof be given? Let the apostle answer: ‘With all long-suffering and doctrine.’ Principle should be brought to bear upon the one who needs reproof; but never should the wrongs of God’s people be passed by indifferently....*COOD 47.1*

“God would have his people disciplined and brought into harmony of action that they may see eye to eye and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. In order to bring about this state of things, there is much to be done. The carnal heart must be subdued and transformed. God designs that there shall ever be a living testimony in the church. It will be necessary to reprove and exhort, and some will need to be rebuked sharply, as the case demands. We hear the plea, ‘O, I am so sensitive; I can not bear the least reflection!’ If these persons would state the case correctly, they would say, ‘I am so self-willed, so self-sufficient, so proud-spirited, that I will not be dictated to; I will not be reproved. I claim the right of individual judgment; I have a right to believe and talk as I please.’ The Lord would not have us yield up our individuality. But what man is a proper judge of how far this matter of individual independence should be carried?-*Testimonies for the Church 3:358, 360*.*COOD 47.2*

In the light of the following scriptures it surely is improper to press

too strongly our individual independence. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” *Jeremiah 10:23*. “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” *Proverbs 28:26*. “Cursed be the man that trusteth is man.” *Jeremiah 17:5*. Surely this text would comprehend self-confidence without counsel, because “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes.” *Proverbs 16:2*. Better indeed it is to “commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.” (*Psalm 37:5*), and profit by the words of Solomon, “In the multitude of counselors there is safety.” *Proverbs 11:14*.*COOD 48.1*

## 10 AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH

THESE things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority." *Titus 2:15*. This authority did not grow out of the fact that Titus was minister, and therefore had an individual right and power to dictate how everything should be done; but the authority was like that possessed by Christ, who is our example, and of whose teachings we read: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." *Matthew 7:28, 29*.*COOD 49.1*

Luke's record of Christ's teaching is that "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words [words setting forth God's love and unmerited favor to men; not words of dictatorial authority] which proceed out of his mouth." *Luke 4:22*. His words were indeed those of authority; for he himself said of them: "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." *John 14:10*. As he thus gave instruction and reproofs on the strength of God's Word, energized by the Holy Spirit, the soldiers even who were sent to arrest him reported that "Never man spake like this man." *John 7:46*.*COOD 49.2*

**Danger of Independence**

The danger of indulging a spirit of individual independence is seen in the following quotation: “Independence is a poor thing when it leads you to have too much confidence in yourself, and to trust to your own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly estimate the judgment of your brethren, especially of those in the offices which God has appointed for the saving of his people. God has invested his church with special authority and power, which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for in so doing he despises the voice of God.”-*Testimonies of the Church 3:417*.*COOD 49.3*

“Christ gives power to the voice of the church. ‘Verily I say unto you, whatsoever Ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ No such thing is countenanced as one man’s starting out on his own individual responsibility, and advocating what views he chooses, irrespective of the judgment of the church. God has bestowed the highest power under heaven upon his church. It is the voice of God in his united people in church capacity which is to be respected.”-*Ibid., 450, 451*.*COOD 50.1*

**Satan's Working Near the End**

"As we come near the close of time, Satan comes down with great power knowing that his time is short. Especially will his power be exercised upon the remnant. He will war against them, and seek to divide and scatter them, that they may grow weak and be overthrown. The people of God should move understandingly, and should be united in their efforts. They should be of the same mind, of the same judgment; then their efforts will not be scattered, but will tell forcibly in the upbuilding of the present truth. Order must be observed, and there must be union in maintaining order, or Satan will take advantage....*COOD 50.2*

"God is not pleased to have his people leave the matters of the church at loose ends, and suffer the enemy to have the whole advantage and control affairs as best pleases him."-*Ibid., Vol. I, 210, 211*.*COOD 50.3*

**Respect for God's Chosen Leaders**

"The angels who fell were anxious to become independent of God. They were very beautiful, very glorious, but dependent on God for their happiness, and for the light and intelligence they enjoyed. They fell from their high estate through insubordination. Christ and his church are inseparable. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to lead out, and to bear the responsibilities connected with his work and with the advancement and spread of the truth, is to reject the means which God has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of his people. To pass these by, and think your light must come through no other channel than directly from God, places you in a position where you are liable to deception, and to be overthrown."-*Ibid., Vol. III, 418, 419.COOD 50.4*

**Bound in Heaven**

"The world's Redeemer has invested great power with his church. He states the rules to be applied in cases of trial with its members. After he has given explicit directions as to the course to be pursued, he says: 'Verily I say unto, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever [in church discipline] ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.' Thus even the heavenly authority ratifies the discipline of the church in regard to its members, when the Bible rule has been followed.*COOD 51.1*

"The Word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body. There have ever been individuals of independent minds, who have claimed that they were right, that God has especially taught, impressed, and led them. Each has a theory of his own, views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the Word of God. Each one has a different theory and faith, yet each claims special light from God. These draw away from the body, and each one is a separate church of himself. All these can not be right, yet they all claim to be led of the Lord. The word of inspiration is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus."-*Ibid., 428, 429*.*COOD 51.2*

**How the Lord Taught Paul**

“Many have the idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of his acknowledged followers in the world. But this is condemned by Jesus in his teachings, and in the examples, the facts, which he has given for our instruction. Here was Paul, one whom Christ was to fit for a most important work, one who was to a chosen vessel unto him, brought directly into the presence of Christ; yet he does not teach him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; and when he asks, ‘What wilt thou have me to do?’ the Saviour does not tell him directly, but places him in connection with with his church. They will tell thee what thou must do. Jesus is the sinner’s friend. His heart is ever open, ever touched with human woe; he has all power, both in heaven and upon earth; but he respects the means which he has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men. He directs Saul to the church, thus acknowledging the power that he has invested in it as a channel of light to the world. It is Christ’s organized body upon the earth, and respect is required to be paid to his ordinances. In the case of Saul, Ananias represents Christ, and he also represents Christ’s ministers upon the earth who are appointed to act in Christ’s stead.”-*Ibid., 433*.*COOD 52.1*

## 11 CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS

"NOW then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." *2 Corinthians 5:20*.*COOD 53.1*

An ambassador is "a minister of the highest rank, sent by one government to another to represent that government." In this text the ambassadors of Christ are represented as if speaking to the people "in Christ's stead"-Christ's representatives. How important then that we all, as Christ's servants, in all our labors and demeanor be actuated by the spirit of Christ, and that the Christ life be wrought out in our daily life, and in our efforts communicate to others the truths pertaining to the kingdom of God.*COOD 53.2*

Paul's request for prayer was "that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." *Ephesians 6:19, 20*. This boldness is not the boldness of self, or self-importance, but boldness to declare the plain truth of Christ's kingdom.*COOD 53.3*

**Little Lower than Angels**

“Jesus requires that those who have been bought by the price of his own life shall make the best use of the talents which he has given them. They are to increase in the knowledge of the divine will, and constantly improve in intellect and morals, until they shall attain to a perfection of character but little lower than that of angels.”-*Testimonies for the Church 4:563*.*COOD 53.4*

**Be Calm or Silent**

“Those who are proclaiming God’s message to the world must not captious or overbearing. They should not be too free to criticize or condemn others....*COOD 53.5*

Give the reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. With fear lest you have not the truth?-No; but with fear lest by some unwise, impatient word, you may close hearts against the truth. If you can not be calm in answering the accusation of enemies, it is better to keep silent.”-*Gospel Workers (1892), 396, 397*.*COOD 54.1*

It is true that our Saviour said, “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, *rebuke* him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” *Luke 17:3, 4*. Mind, our Saviour does not say take heed to your brother that you shall rebuke him; but the great caution is, “Take heed to *yourselves*.” The apostle Paul states it in this way: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; *considering thyself*, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” *Galatians 6:1, 2*.*COOD 54.2*

In addressing the Romans the apostle said: “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.” *Romans 15:1, 2*.*COOD 54.3*

As encouragement to this mode of dealing with the erring the apostle James wrote: “Brethren, if any of you do err form the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” *James 5:19, 20*.*COOD 54.4*

**Quietly Keep Your Soul**

“Do not try too hard to mold your brethren. If you see that they do not meet the requirements of God’s Word, do not condemn; if they provoke, do not retaliate. When things are said that would exasperate, quietly keep your soul from fretting. You see many things which appear wrong in others, and you want to correct these wrongs. You commence in your own strength to work for a reform; but you do not go about it in the right way. You must labor for the erring with a heart subdued, softened by the Spirit of God, and let the Lord work through you, the agent. Roll your burden on Jesus. You feel that the Lord must take up the case, where Satan is striving for the mastery over some soul; but you are to do what you can in humility and meekness, and put the tangled work, the complicated matters, into the hands of God. Follow the directions of his Word, and leave the outcome of the matter to his wisdom. Having done all you can to save your brother, cease worrying, and go calmly about other pressing duties. It is no longer your matter, but God’s.”-*“Testimonies for the Church,” No. 32, pages 103, 104.*COOD 54.5

**Express Sympathy for the Erring**

Again we read: “If a person is in error, be the more kind to him; if you are not courteous, you may drive him away from Christ. Let every word you speak, even the tones of your voice, express interest in, and sympathy for, the souls that are in peril. If you are harsh, denunciatory, and impatient with them, you are doing the work of the enemy. You are opening a door of temptation to them, and Satan will represent you to them as one who knows not the Lord Jesus. They will think their own way is right, and that they are better than you. How, then, can you win the erring?”-*“Special Testimonies,” No. 1, page II*.*COOD 55.1*

“If the truth spoken in the demonstration of the Spirit, does not cut away the idols, it will be of no avail to denounce, and bear down upon the individual. It may appear that some are joined to their idols, yet I saw that we should be very reluctant to give up the poor, deceived ones. We should ever bear in mind that we are all erring mortals, and that Christ exercises much pity for our weakness, and loves us although we err. If God should deal with us as we often deal with one another, we should be consumed. While ministers preach the plain, cutting truth, they must let the truth do the cutting, and hewing, not do it themselves. They should lay the ax, the truths of God’s Word, at the root of the tree, and something will be accomplished. Pour out the testimony just as straight as it is found in the word of God, with a heart full of the warming, quickening influences of his Spirit, all in tenderness, yearning for souls, and the work among God’s people will be effectual.”-*Testimonies for the Church 1:383*.*COOD 55.2*

**Christ Rebuked with Tears**

Still further we read: “Christ himself did not suppress one word of truth, but he spoke it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind attention in his intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a sever word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in his voice as he uttered his scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city he loved, that refused to receive him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They rejected him, the Saviour, but he regarded them with pitying tenderness, and sorrow so deep that it broke his heart. Every soul was precious in his eyes. While he always bore himself with divine dignity, he bowed with tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men he saw fallen souls whom it was his mission to save.”-*“Desire of Ages,” Chap.37, par. 12*.COOD 56.1

## 12 UNITY OF THE CHURCH

“I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.” *Ephesians 4:1-3*.*COOD 57.1*

The apostle, when addressing the Philippians, said, “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 2:1-5*.*COOD 57.2*

To the Corinthians he wrote, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” *1 Corinthians 1:10*.*COOD 57.3*

When writing to the Roman brethren he exhorted to the same unity, adding force to his appeal by reference to the example and teaching of Christ, “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.” *Romans 15:5-7*.*COOD 57.4*

**The Saviour's Prayer for Unity**

"That union and love might exist among his disciples, was the burden of our Saviour's last prayer for them prior to his Crucifixion.... 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou has sent me.'*COOD 57.5*

"Paul writes to the Galatians: 'I would they were even cut off which trouble you. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.'*COOD 58.1*

"The apostle adds a caution to the independent and self-confident: 'If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.... Every man shall bear his own burden.' He who considers himself superior in judgment and experience to his brethren, and despises their counsel and admonition, evinces that he is in a dangerous delusion. The heart is deceitful. He should test his character and life by the Bible standard. God's Word sheds an unerring light upon the pathway of man's life. Notwithstanding the many influences which arise to divert and distract the mind, those who honestly seek God for wisdom will be guided into the right course."-*"Testimonies for the Church." No. 31, pages 232, 233, 239, 243.*COOD 58.2

**Many Members, but One Body**

The apostle Paul illustrates the union which the Lord desires to the manifest in his church on earth by the harmonious action of all the members in the human body: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” *1 Corinthians 12:12, 13*.*COOD 58.3*

“Those who claim to members of Christ’s body will allow their own fancies, their likes and dislikes, to shape their conduct toward even God’s own delegated servants. After Christ has made the infinite sacrifice to redeem us from the oppressive power of Satan, shall we fail to pity and help those who are fallen and sinful like ourselves? Shall one man usurp authority over his brethren, and hurt their souls because he imagines that he has authority, and can do this work? The Lord ‘suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.’ “*COOD 59.1*

**Not Toleration, but Love**

“Every arbitrary exaction of man toward his fellow man will react upon himself in double measure. Just in proportion as the human agent is a partaker of the divine nature, he will be in sympathy with Christ. Jesus says, ‘a new commandment I give unto you [that ye tolerate one another?-No], that ye love one another.... By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’ ‘This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.’”-*The Review and Herald, May 26, 1896*.*COOD 59.2*

The apostle Peter calls attention to the example of Christ, and exhorts to unity in these words: “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” *1 Peter 2:21-23*.*COOD 59.3*

**Press Together**

“Let each who claims to follow Christ, esteem himself less, and others more. Press together, press together! In union is strength and victory; in discord and division there is weakness and defeat. These words have been spoken to me from heaven. As God’s ambassador, I speak them to you. Let every one seek to answer the prayer of Christ—‘that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.’ O, what unity is this! And, says Christ, ‘By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’”—*“Testimonies for the Church,” No. 33, page 16.*COOD 59.4

**Bitterness and Dissension from Satan**

"Followers of Jesus Christ will not act independently one of another. Our strength must be in God, and it must be husbanded, to be put forth in noble consecrated action. It must not be wasted in meaningless movements. In union there is strength.... No strife or variance should exist among the workers. The work is one, superintended by one leader."-*Ibid., page 63.*COOD 60.1

Again, "Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence. Satan well understands this. Never was he more determined than now to make of none effect the truth of God, by causing bitterness and dissension among the Lord's people. The world is against us, the popular churches are against us, the laws of the land will soon be against us. If there was ever a time when the people of God should *press together*, it is now."-*"Testimonies for the Church," No. 31, page 232; Vol. V, page 236.*COOD 60.2

All this is in harmony with the words of the psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." *Psalm 133:1*.COOD 60.3

## 13 ORDER IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH

“BUILT upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” *Ephesians 2:20-22*.*COOD 61.1*

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” “Let all things be done decently and in order.” *1 Corinthians 14:33, 40*.*COOD 61.2*

From these scriptures it is evident that in order for the Lord’s church to move in harmony, and to grow into this unity and love acceptable with him, its members should be “fitly framed together.” What can produce such a condition except each one find his proper place in the church; and with cheerfulness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, perform the duties connected with such position?*COOD 61.3*

**Visible Leaders in the Ancient Church**

As God is the author of “peace in *all* churches of his saints,” he must have arranged for avoiding “confusion” in “the church in the wilderness.” *Acts 7:38*. The invisible leader of that company was Christ. Of the Israelites it is said: “The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them by the way; and by might in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.” *Exodus 13:21*. Moses and Aaron were the visible leaders of that great company. “Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.” *Psalm 77:20*. Isaiah says: “Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? that led them by the right had of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name?” *Isaiah 63:11, 12*.*COOD 61.4*

To move that vast host of six hundred thousand men, beside women and children (at least thee millions in all), with their cattle, and other belongings, must have required good generalship, and the most perfect order. This they must have had. “The children of Israel went up *harnessed* out of the land of Egypt.” *Exodus 13:18*. For the word “harnessed” we read in the margin, “or five in a rank.” So we see that in their marching there was observed something like military order.*COOD 62.1*

**Moses' Generalship**

We read of Moses' generalship as follows: "I was pointed back to the children of Israel. Very soon after leaving Egypt they were organized and most thoroughly disciplined. God had in his special providence qualified Moses to stand at the head of the armies of Israel. He had been a mighty warrior to lead the armies of the Egyptians, and in generalship he could not be surpassed by any man."-*Gospel Workers (1892), 158*.*COOD 62.2*

The order established in the church under Moses seemed to proceed on the principle expressed by Paul to Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order *the things that are wanting."* *Titus 1:5*. How comprehensive, and how specific the instruction-"the things that are wanting." This is equivalent to saying, As you look over the situation you will see the needs of the work, and what is required for its successful management. Supply the demand by providing for what is *wanting*.*COOD 62.3*

When the sanctuary, with its furniture, was constructed, it had to be set up, taken down, and removed from place to place. There must have been order in all this; for if left with no definite regulations, as though it was "everybody's business," soon it would have been "nobody's business," and confusion would have been the result.*COOD 62.4*

**The Care of the Sanctuary**

“The Lord did not leave his holy tabernacle to be borne indiscriminately by any of the tribe that might choose. He was so particular as to specify the order he would have observed in bearing the sacred ark, and to designate a special family of the Levites to bear it.... In all their journeying they were required to observe perfect order. Every tribe carried a standard bearing the sign which distinguished that tribe, and each tribe was required to pitch under its own standard.... The Levites were designated by the Lord as the tribe in the midst of whom the sacred ark was to be borne, Moses and Aaron marching just in front of the ark, and the sons of Aaron following near them, each bearing a trumpet. They were to receive directions from Moses, which they were to signify to the people by speaking through the trumpets. These trumpets gave special sounds, which the people understood, and they directed their movements accordingly....*COOD 63.1*

“The Lord designated a special family of the tribe of Levi to bear the ark; and others of the Levites were specially appointed by God to bear the tabernacle and all its furniture, and to perform the work of setting up and taking down the tabernacle.... Persons were chosen who could appreciate the sacredness of the work in which they were engaged....*COOD 63.2*

“The travels of the children of Israel are faithfully described; the deliverance which the Lord wrought for them, their perfect organization and special order, their sin in murmuring against Moses and thus against God, their transgressions, their rebellions, their punishments, their carcasses strewn in the wilderness because of their unwillingness to submit to God’s wise arrangements,-this faithful picture is hung up before us as a warning lest we follow their example of disobedience, and fall like them.”-*Gospel Workers (1892), 158-160*.*COOD 63.3*

**Jethro's Advice**

The Lord had so evidently wrought through Moses that the people would naturally look to him to settle any controversy that might arise. This they did do until Jethro, his father-in-law, visited the camp, and seeing the heavy burdens borne by Moses, gave the following wise counsel: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: when they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.... Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens, and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses harkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said." *Exodus 18:13-24*.*COOD 64.1*

**God Approves Jethro's Advice**

The Lord's recognition of such a plan is thus recorded: "The Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the leaders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: And I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." *Numbers 11:16, 17*.*COOD 65.1*

In *Deuteronomy 1:9-18*, we have a record of Moses' choice of the captains and judges over the thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens; and that when he submitted the plan to the people they answered "and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do." So the people accepted Jethro's advice, and the Lord specially recognized the order thus established.*COOD 65.2*

In *Gospel Workers (1892), 160*, we see that the Lord is "as particular now as then. And he designs that we should learn lessons of order and organization from the perfect order instituted in the days of Moses, for the benefit of the children of Israel."*COOD 65.3*

## 14 ORDER IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

“THESE things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” *1 Timothy 3:14, 15*.*COOD 66.1*

The behavior here mentioned does not refer simply to the respect shown for the place of worship, but includes more especially the proper conducting of the spiritual and temporal interests of the church, the expression “house of God” referring to the church rather than to a church building. This is evident from the fact that the apostle had just been speaking of officers in the church as those who had ability to “rule well” their own houses. To persons possessing such a faculty was to be commmitted the care of the church. Paul inquires, “If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? *1 Timothy 3:5*. Such good ruling in the household the Lord commended in the case of Abraham. Of him the Lord said, “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.” *Genesis 18:19*.*COOD 66.2*

**Order Established as Necessity Appeared**

Paul, on whom rested “the care of all the churches (*2 Corinthians 11:28*), seemed to recognize the fact that success in prosecuting the work of the gospel, as well as prosperity in any other enterprise, demanded that order and system be established and observed. In the introduction of the different points of order the same principle is recognized as in the ancient church, that is, to supply the lack as far and as fast as a necessity for system in working should appear. This mode of procedure is suggested in his instruction upon this subject, found in his epistle to Titus, to whom he said, “Set in order *the things that are wanting*. *Titus 1:5*.*COOD 66.3*

**Heavenly Calls, and Earthly Appointments**

From the reading of the New Testament we see that those occupying leading positions in the church were of two classes: those receiving their call and appointment directly from the Lord, and those recognized, or directly appointed by the church. Among the former are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. While the church may by its voice recognize these as of divine appointment, it appears to be left to the churches, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to select and set apart elders and deacons, and to provide such other officers as may be found necessary for the management of the church in its various lines of work.*COOD 67.1*

**Deacons Chosen**

One of the first points in gospel order established by the church was in connection with events immediately following the day of Pentecost, as is seen in the following scripture: “And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this *business*. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.” *Acts 6:1-6*.*COOD 67.2*

**Deaconship Defined**

The men were *chosen* and ordained to take charge of the "*business*" affairs of a local church. Such persons, in other scriptures, are called "deacons." The Greek word "*diakonos*," which is the New Testament is rendered "deacon," is thus defined by Greenfield in his Greek lexicon: "Ministry in the church, deaconship, the office of collecting and distributing alms to the poor, or of inquiring into and relieving their wants."*COOD 68.1*

The apostle Paul said of those who should properly fill the office of deacon, that "they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." *1 Timothy 3:13*. This certainly was true in the case of Stephen and Philip, two of the seven, for we read of them as being powerful ministers of the word. Philip is afterward mentioned as an "evangelist," as we learn from *Acts 21:8*.*COOD 68.2*

**Bishop and Elder the Same**

When Paul had set before the church the necessity of order, he set Titus at work to carry out the plan. He wrote him as follows; “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.” *Titus 1:5*. He then proceeds to give the qualifications of a bishop. It may be inquired, why does he specify the qualifications of a bishop, when he told Titus to ordain elders? By comparing what is said in the New Testament respecting the office of bishop, and elder, we see the terms apply to one in charge of a local church, and that both terms apply to the same office. The application of the word “bishop” to one in charge of a “diocese,” composed of many churches, seems to have arisen this side of the time of writing the New Testament.*COOD 68.3*

**Choosing and Ordaining Church Officers**

Concerning the church in apostolic times we quote: “The church was in danger in the apostles’ day of being imposed upon and deceived by false teachers. Therefore the brethren chose men who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house and preserving order in their own families, and who could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning them, and then, according to the mind of the church and Holy Ghost, they were set apart by the laying on of hands. Having received their commission from God, and having the approbation of the church, they went forth baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and administering the ordinances of the Lord’s house, often waiting upon the saints by presenting them the emblems of the broken body and spilt blood of the crucified Saviour, to keep fresh in the memory of God’s beloved children his sufferings and death.”-*“Early Writings,” Supplement to “Experience and Views,” pages 15, 16.*COOD 69.1

## A Church Council, How Composed

When matters came up of interest to the entire body of the early church, we learn by reading the record of the council held at Jerusalem over the question of circumcision (recorded in *Acts 15*), how they proceeded. There were certain men which came down from Judea, who "taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye can not be saved.... And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." *Acts 15:1-6*.*COOD 69.2*

"The apostles and elders at Jerusalem acted as counselors, in a manner to give room for the Holy Ghost to act as judge. Christ came into that assembly by his Spirit, and found the apostles, elders, and brethren in a teachable frame of mind, and at once led them out of their difficulties. In this case at an early date in the Christian church the true doctrine of the leadership of Christ and the equality of the ministerial brotherhood stands the test."-*Elder James White, note in Testimony No. 25, pamphlet edition of 1875*.*COOD 69.3*

In this council different ones freely expressed their minds. The true state of things was presented,-how the Lord was working by his Spirit with the uncircumcised Gentiles,-after which a decision was stated in these words: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." *Acts 15:28, 29*.*COOD 70.1*

**Action of the Apostolic Council**

Concerning their action, we quote from “Spirit of Prophecy” these words: “The matter resulted in much discussion and want of harmony in the church, until finally the church at Antioch, apprehending that a division among them would occur from any further discussion of the question, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, together with some responsible men of Antioch, to Jerusalem; and lay the matter before the apostles and elders.*COOD 70.2*

“The council which decided this case was composed of the founders of the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches. Elders from Jerusalem, and deputies from Antioch, were present; and the most influential churches were represented. The council did not claim infallibility in their deliberations, but moved from the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. They saw that God himself had decided that question by favoring the Gentiles with the Holy Ghost; and it was left for them to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*COOD 70.3*

“The entire body of Christians were not called to vote upon the question. The apostles and elders-men of influence and judgment-framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches.”-*The Spirit of Prophecy 3:369, 376*, Edition of 1878.*COOD 71.1*

## 15 SUBMISSION VERSUS CREED POWER AND FORCE

“NOW therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” *Ephesians 2:19-22*.*COOD 72.1*

After the church has been *fitly framed together*; that is, after it is properly organized, each person filling his or her appropriate place in the body, its growth is assured by each so following the Lord’s counsel as to retain the continued indwelling of his Spirit. This growth is thus beautifully expressed: “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” *Ephesians 4:16*. Some of the instruction given for developing such growth is found in the following words: “Be kindly affectioned one toward another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.” *Romans 12:10*. “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” *Ephesians 5:20, 21*.*COOD 72.2*

**Demeanor Toward Leaders**

Having stated how all members of the church should care for each other, the apostle proceeds to speak of their demeanor toward the leaders in the work: “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourself unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” *1 Peter 5:5*. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” *Hebrews 13:17*. “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.” *1 Timothy 5:17*. To all the flock instruction is given, showing how to proceed in case faults appear in members of the flock, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” *Galatians 6:1*.*COOD 72.3*

**Not to be Proud of Position**

The apostles seemed to recognize the fact that when that deference and respect due to those who were really acting as "the Lord's anointed"-filling responsible places in the church-should be shown, there would be a liability, on the part of such (if self in them was not fully surrendered to God), of becoming lifted up with pride, as though they, of themselves, were superior to their brethren. To guard against this they received cautions, of which the following are samples: "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that can not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." *Titus 2:7, 8*. "Be thou an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.... Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." *1 Timothy 4:12, 16*.*COOD 73.1*

A late Testimony says: "He who is chosen to fill the office of elder is not, because of this, to become self-exalted. Let him remember that the office does not make the man, but that before angels and before man he is to honor his office."-*Review, April 26, 1906*.*COOD 73.2*

**Who Are the Greatest**

The apostles saw that with one selected as elder there would be a conflict of self-denial and self. Even among themselves, when personally accompanying Christ, there was a "strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest." So in the church, after his ascension, there might be a desire for power with some of those chosen as "overseers" of the church. The first advice in genuine service to God is, "let him deny himself." We read of Christ's mission to earth, when acting as our example, that he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant."*COOD 74.1*

**Theudas and Diotrephes**

The apostles had a knowledge of the fate of Theudas, who had risen up “boasting *himself* to be somebody.” What had been seen in Jewish times was just as likely to develop from human hearts in Gentile times. As Paul at Miletus met the elders from Ephesus he said to them, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples *after them*.” *Acts 20:29, 30*. About thirty years after this, in John’s time, there was a striking manifestation of this self-exalted work, in the domineering course of Diotrephes, of whom John said: “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not [it seems he took the liberty to withhold John’s wholesome epistle from the church]. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.” *3 John 9, 10*.*COOD 74.2*

**The Apostasy Predicted**

In writing to the church in Thessalonica, Paul called their attention more fully to the manner in which this self-exaltation, and love of power, was to be developed in the apostasy of the church. Speaking of Christ's second coming and events to precede it, he said: "that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." *2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4*.*COOD 75.1*

We see in this case that the outgrowth of self-exaltation was to result in this great apostasy in the church. The exaltation in the individual dethrones God from the heart, bringing the man directly under the dominion of self, sin, and Satan. As predicted in this scripture, the toleration by the church of self-exaltation of the leaders in the church resulted in placing in the temple of God (the church) a head who declared himself as God upon earth to rule the Lord's people.*COOD 75.2*

**Love of the Truth the Safeguard**

To avoid being taken in this snare of Satan the people were admonished to cleave to the "*truth*," to "*the word*." Of those who would be involved in this great apostasy the apostle said, "They received not the love of *the truth*, that they might be saved." "Who believed not *the truth*" "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the the spirit and belief of *the truth*." As to what truth is here meant, we read: "Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by *word*, or *our epistle.*" *2 Thessalonians 2:10, 12, 13, 15*.*COOD 75.3*

**Opinions Instead of the Word**

As this falling away is traced through the pages of history, there is seen in its growth a departure from the direct teachings of the word of God. Instead of cleaving to the Bible as their only standard of faith, and expressing that faith in scripture language, there came into their teaching a mystical principle of interpretation. Instead of following the advice of Paul to "consider what I *say*; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things," they were telling what the Bible meant, their interpretations often being contrary to what the scriptures in other portions taught. Those who adhered directly to "the *word* of truth" saw in this mystery-work a development of just what the apostle had predicted. As they proclaimed against this innovation there arose a direct conflict between those who taught plainly stated Bible truths, and those who adhered to *creeds* formulated by men. The teachers of the creeds being "high minded" and self-confident, soon lost the molding influence of the Lord's Spirit in their hearts. And so the people who followed the creed-makers were rapidly corrupted from the simplicity of the gospel. *COOD 75.4*

**The Five Steps of Apostasy**

In setting up of this “abomination that maketh desolate” (*Daniel 12:11*), we see that five distinct steps were taken:-*COOD 76.1*

1. Forming a creed, expressing their faith in man-made phrases instead of adhering to the word of the Lord.*COOD 76.2*

2. Making that man-made creed a test of fellowship, and denouncing all as heretics who would not assent to the exact wording of their creeds.*COOD 76.3*

3. Making the creed a rule by which all heretics must be tried. Many were thus declared sinners whose faith was more in harmony with the direct statements of the Bible than that of those who decreed against them.*COOD 76.4*

4. Constituting themselves a tribunal for the trial of heretics, and excluding from their fellowship all who would not assent to their creeds. Not content to debar such from church privileges in this world, they declared them subjects for the lake of fire.*COOD 76.5*

5. Having thus kindled a hatred in their own hearts against all who did not conform to their creeds, they next invoked and obtained the aid of the civil power to torture, and kill with sword, with hunger, with flame, and with beasts of the earth, those whom they had declared unfit to remain in the world.*COOD 77.1*

Then appeared on the stage of action one class of professed Christians with a head over them, actually declaring that he was “God on earth,” persecuting another class of Christians who were conscientiously following the Lord and his Word,-a class of whom it might be said, in the light in which God views them (as was said, of the ancient worthies), “of whom the world was not worthy.” *Hebrews 11:38*.*COOD 77.2*

## 16 CALLING OUT OF THE LAST CHURCH

“REMEMBER therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” *Revelation 3:3*.*COOD 78.1*

These words were addressed to the “*Sardis*” church. That church is followed by another called the “Philadelphia” church, of whom it is said they have “kept the word of my patience.” They have “held fast” to that which their predecessors let go. To this Philadelphia church the Lord says, Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” *Verse 11*. To them he also declares, “I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” *Verse 8*.*COOD 78.2*

**The Sardis and Philadelphia Churches**

It appears from these words that, at the time here designated, the Sardis church had heard the glorious announcement of Christ's coming "at the door," and that they had professedly received it; but had now come to a crisis where they were about to reject that precious truth; that they tried to hedge up the way of those who held fast to the message; and that they sought to close the door before those who would advance with the light. This obliged the believers to separate from their former brethren. These persecuted ones, "coming out," and boldly declaring the truths their former associates tried to suppress, are denominated the "Philadelphia" church,-the church of brotherly love.*COOD 78.3*

## Light Rejected Caused Separation

The course here delineated was the exact experience of those engaged in the great second advent movement in the year 1844, and resulted in a separation of the Adventists from the nominal churches. Such a separation on the part of those who resolved to follow the path of truth seems to be in harmony with God's plan for the furtherance of his cause in the earth, as shown in the following quotation: "As the light and life of men was rejected by the ecclesiastical authorities in the days of Christ, so it has been rejected in every succeeding generation. Again and again the history of Christ's withdrawal from Judea has been repeated. When the Reformers preached the word of God, they had no thought of separating themselves from the established church; but the religious leaders would not tolerate the light, and those that bore it were forced to seek another class, who were longing for the truth. In our day few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit. Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatsoever guise it may be presented. Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love, in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many time those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience."-*"Desire of Ages," Chap. 23, par. 5.*COOD 78.4

**Origin of Modern Sects**

Relative to this “separation” for the sake of truth, we quote the following: “In the Reformation the Lord sent his gospel anew, and with power, to all people.... Multitudes received the gospel, and walked in the light as it was then revealed. But as that was the first step out of darkness, there were other steps to be taken, to preach the fulness of the gospel: there was advance light in which to walk....*COOD 79.1*

“Many of those who had come out of darkness, and had taken the first steps into the light of the gospel, stopped there, became satisfied with that .... They grew proud of what they had, exalted themselves upon what they had, and became exclusive. Then, as the gospel must go on, as the light must increase more and more unto the perfect day, it followed that all those who would walk in the advancing light, all who would receive more truth,-the fuller gospel,-were excluded from the company of those who were self-satisfied, and were obliged to go forward as had the others at the first.”-*A. T. Jones, in Review of Feb. 20, 1900*.*COOD 79.2*

**Two Calls with Results**

This “coming out” and establishing new sects, as new points of truth were received, continued until the Lord sent a message to his people,-a message on which all might have united, if they would. It was the great advent proclamation,-the announcement that “the hour of his judgment is come.” It was the first call to the marriage supper of the Lamb. This message was to be declared “at supper time,”-at the close of the gospel day,-“to them that were bidden.” *Luke 14:17*.*COOD 80.1*

As the gospel message was first declared to the Jews,-those who had the Scriptures, and professed faith in God,-and continued with them until they rejected it (*Acts 13:46*),-so the first great call at the close of the gospel day was to go “to them who had been bidden.”-to the professed churches of God. But when they rejected and opposed this great truth, the Lord, by a second call (*Luke 14:21*),-the second angel’s message of *Revelation 14:8*,-separated a people to go forth to the end, with the advancing light of his truth.*COOD 80.2*

Those who proclaimed the second angel’s message stated plainly that those who were clinging to the mere opinions of men in place of the plain statements of God’s Word, were following thus far in the steps of the mother church of Rome, and were in danger of placing themselves where the day of the Lord would finally overtake them like “a thief in the night.” The nominal churches were instructed that, in this setting aside of the word of the Lord in order to establish their own opinions and creeds, they were like the papal church, who took “the Bible as explained by tradition, by customs, sayings, and practises of the fathers, popes, and councils: which was a direct departure from the Protestant rule of taking ‘the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the standard of faith.’ “*COOD 80.3*

## J. V. Himes on the Separation in 1844

Concerning this second message and advent experience in that call for separation, we quote from Elder J. V. Himes, one of the prominent laborers in that message. Speaking of William Miller, he said: “His labors had been incessant and effectual in awakening professors of religion to the true hope of God’s people and the necessary preparation for the advent of the Lord; as also the awakening of all classes of the unconverted to a sense of their lost condition, and the duty of immediate repentance and conversion to God, as a preparation to meet the bridegroom in peace at his coming. These were the great objects of his labors. He made no attempt to convert men to a sect or party in religion. Hence he labored among all parties and sects, without interfering with their organization or discipline, believing that the members of the different communions could retain their standing and at the same time prepare for the advent of their King, and labor for the salvation of men in these relations until the consummation of their hope.*COOD 81.1*

“When we were persuaded of the truth of the advent at hand, and embraced the doctrine publicly [in 1840], we entertained the same views, and pursued the same course among the different sects, where we were called, in the providence of God, to labor. We told the ministers and churches that it was no part of our business to break them up, or to divide and distract them. We had one distinct object, and that was to give the ‘cry,’ the warning of the judgment ‘at the door,’ and persuade our fellow men to get ready for the event. Most of the ministers and churches that opened their doors to us and our brethren who were proclaiming the advent doctrine, co-operated with us until the last year. The ministry and membership who availed themselves of our labors, but had not sincerely embraced the doctrine, saw that they must either go with the doctrine, and preach and maintain it, or in the crisis which was right upon them, they would have difficulty with the decided and determined believers. They therefore decided against the doctrine, and determined, some by one policy and some by another, to suppress the subject. This placed our brethren and sisters among them in a most trying position. Most of them loved their churches, and could not think of leaving. But when they were ridiculed,

oppressed, and in various ways cut off from their former privileges and enjoyments, and when the ‘meat in due season’ was withheld from them, and the siren song of ‘peace and safety’ was sounded in their ears from Sabbath to Sabbath, they were soon weaned from their party predilections, and arose in the majesty of their strength, shook off the yoke, and raised the cry, ‘Come out of her, my people.’”-*Letter of J. V. Himes, Aug. 29, 1844*.COOD 81.2

**Course of the Churches in 1844**

Another engaged in the movement of 1844 said of the opposition from the churches: “The orthodox churches used every means to prevent the belief in Christ’s soon coming from spreading. No liberty was granted in their meetings to those who dared mention a hope of the soon coming of Christ. Professed lovers of Jesus scornfully rejected the tidings that he whom they claimed as their best friend was soon to visit them. They were excited and angered against those who proclaimed the news of his coming, and who rejoiced that they should speedily behold him in his glory.”-*Mrs. E. G. While, in Testimonies for the Church 1:54.COOD 82.1*

**How the Second Message Advanced**

In giving the second message, Elder Himes said: “Though we may not be all agreed as to what constitutes Babylon, we are agreed in the instant and final separation from all who oppose the doctrine of the coming and kingdom of God at hand. We believe it to be a case of life and death. It is death to remain connected with those bodies that spake lightly of, or oppose the coming of the Lord. It is life to come out from human tradition, and stand upon the word of God, and look daily for the appearing of the Lord. We therefore now say to all who are in any way entangled in the yoke of bondage, ‘come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.... And ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’”-*Letter of Aug. 29, 1844*.*COOD 83.1*

**William Miller on the Situation in 1844**

About the same time William Miller said: “It is most unnatural and unaccountable that the Christian churches should exclude this doctrine and their members for this blessed hope.... What do they exclude for? I heard of some being excluded for ‘hymning’ second advent melodies; others for insanity, when all the insanity proved against them was, that they were watching for Christ. O God, ‘forgive them, for they know what they do.’ “*COOD 83.2*

**The Crisis Reached**

How the Lord used the opposition to develop a separate people is further described by Brother Himes. He compared it to the course of Paul at Ephesus:" 'But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.' It was not until 'divers were hardened' and 'spake evil of that way' (the Lord's coming) 'before the multitude' that our brethren were moved to come out and separate from the churches. They could not endure the evil speaking of the 'evil servants.' And the churches that could pursue the course of oppression and 'evil speaking' toward those who were looking for the 'blessed hope,' were to them none other than the daughters of the mystic Babylon. They so proclaimed them, and came into the liberty of the gospel."-*Letter of Aug. 29, 1844*.*COOD 83.3*

## 17 ANARCHY OR ORDER, WHICH?

“BUT call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.... Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” *Hebrews 10:32, 33, 35-37*.*COOD 85.1*

**Apostolic and Advent Experiences Compared**

In these scriptures reference is made to the experience of the early Christians, and also to the experience of those waiting for Christ's second coming. By comparison a similarity in the situation is seen. The disciples met with a disappointment in their expectations, so did those proclaiming the second advent of Christ. It was said of the early Christians, that "the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue." *John 9:22*. The believers in Christ's second advent were excluded from the churches for even daring to express their hope in Christ's near coming. Because of reproach and persecution the early Christians were "made a gazing-stock." After the close of the 2300 days,-Oct. 22, 1844,-one who would still avow himself an Adventist was made the butt of ridicule both by professors and non-professors.*COOD 85.2*

Our younger brethren, who did not pass through that experience, but have later "become the companions of them that were so used," have but a faint conception of the sore trial of the "come-outers," as those were then called, who had separated themselves from the churches for the truth's sake.*COOD 85.3*

**Geo. Storrs in the Second Message**

Geo. Storrs said of the churches, while the second angel's message was being given, in 1844: "Which of them will suffer a soul to remain among them *in peace*, that openly and fearlessly avows his faith in the advent at the door? Are not the terms of remaining among them undisturbed, that you wholly refrain from a *public* expression of faith in the coming of the Lord this year, whatever your convictions may be on the subject, and however important you may feel it to be to cry, 'Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come.' "*COOD 86.1*

**Testimony on Babylon**

L. D. Mansfield, who was laboring at that time in Oneida, N. Y., said: “I am more fully persuaded than ever before, that the religious *organizations* of the present day constitute no small portion of that Babylon which is to be thrown down with violence, and found no more at all.... It seems to me, however, that in some of the *organizations*, the resemblance to the little horn is most striking.” To show animosity of the churches against the doctrine, he spoke of a class leader in the place, who said, “If a man should come into my house and say he believed Christ would come this year, I would turn him out of doors.”*COOD 86.2*

How like the experience of Paul and Silas while they were laboring at Thessalonica, when “the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason.” *Acts 17:5*.*COOD 86.3*

**Course of Opponents in 1844**

Concerning the course pursued by mobs in various place, we read: “They were enraged that we should believe in the advent of the Lord.... We could only liken the conduct of the mob to that which surrounded the door of Lot, on the evening pending the destruction of Sodom. In New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other places, the wicked manifested the same feelings, and on Sunday the thirteenth instant, the Advent meetings in many places were broken up by them.”-*Midnight Cry of Oct. 31, 1844*.*COOD 87.1*

**The Opposition Charged to Organization**

The course of the churches in circumscribing everything to just the tenor of their creeds, led the mass of those who separated from them to look with disfavor on any form of organization. Even some of their teachers favored such conclusions. The following from the pen of Geo. Storrs, one of the earnest Advent laborers will serve as a sample of that teaching: “Take care that you do not seek to organize another church. No church can be organized by man’s invention but what it becomes Babylon *the moment* it is *organized*. The Lord organized his own church by the strong bond of love. Stronger than that can not be made; and when such bonds will not hold together the professed followers of Christ, they cease to be his followers, and drop off from the body as a matter of course.”*COOD 87.2*

**An Address of Caution**

An address, signed by William Miller, Elon Galusha, W. N. Whiting, Apollos Hale, and J. V. Himes, cautioned against the danger of "yielding to a spirit of revenge against the churches on account of their injustice toward us, and of waging an indiscriminate warfare against all such *organizations.*" This advice was given a few weeks after Elder Storr's statement against any form of organization. It seemed designed of the Lord to hold the people from assuming too ultra ground on the subject of church order and organization.*COOD 87.3*

While we can recognize the hand of the Lord in bringing out a people by the second angel's message, *free* from the power of creeds, and placed in condition where they could search for and accept his truth, this liberty was not a permission to run into anarchy and confusion. It was just as true then that liberty did not mean license, fanaticism, or confusion as in the days of the apostles, when it was said to the Galatians, "Brethren, we have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." *Galatians 5:13*.*COOD 88.1*

## The Lord's Purpose in Separation

The Lord's purpose in this separation of his people from their oppressors very soon became apparent. Light on the great theme of "*life and death,*" or no immortality out of Christ, was published in that stirring pamphlet of Geo. Storrs, containing his six sermons on future punishment, the nature of man, the state of the dead, etc. This shed still clearer light on the coming of Christ as the only hope of future life to God's people. This truth gave joy indeed to the hearts of believers waiting and expecting the immediate return of their King.*COOD 88.2*

After the close of the prophetic period,-Oct. 22, 1844-and until the Adventists should get an understanding of the real event to transpire at the "end of days," they were like sheep without a shepherd. It could be said of them as in olden time, "There was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."*COOD 88.3*

**The Situation After the Seventh Month 1844**

Elder James White said of the situation in the autumn of 1844, and following: “After the time passed, there was great confusion, and the majority were strongly opposed to any organization, holding that it was inconsistent with the perfect liberty of the gospel! Mrs. White was always opposed to every form of fanaticism, and early announced that some form of organization was necessary to prevent and correct confusion. Few at the present time can appreciate the firmness which was then required to maintain her position against the prevailing anarchy.”-*Note in “Supplement to Experience and Views,” page 12*.*COOD 88.4*

The prophet Isaiah exhorts us to “look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.” *Isaiah 51:1*. We call attention to the ideas held by the people from whom the majority came who first accepted the third angel’s message, to show the difficulties that had to be overcome in order to save our ranks from confusion, and to establish a people in true gospel order.*COOD 89.1*

**First-day Adventists in 1849 and Onward**

The writer, being privileged to hear the first angel's message in December, 1843, witnessed to some extent the conflict between the churches and the Adventists, and having united with the latter by baptism in the spring of 1849, has a distinct recollection of the situation among that people from the time of his association with them up to September, 1852, when he heard the third angel's message, and united with those of this faith. During the three and one-half years of his connection with First-day Adventists he preached the advent doctrine. As a body they were opposed to any form of church organization. No church records were kept, not even a list of members. If a person was sincere in his faith, and was baptized, his name was considered enrolled in the "Lamb's book of life;" it being held that that "was record enough." During this period of three and one-half years no mention was made of needing church officers, and no ordination of any kind took place, except that of one preacher, who, in 1851 urged that according to the New Testament plan, those going forth to preach and baptize should be ordained. To some of the leading ministers he mentioned and urged his own ordination. They reluctantly consented to it, but instead of its being a solemn and impressive ceremony before the body of believers, the ministers waited until the congregation had left, when one of the ministers offered a dry, formal prayer. There was no laying on of hands, and no charge was given.*COOD 89.2*

Neither had that people any system of raising money for the support of their work. If any one felt disposed to give to the ministry, he gave to the minister direct. If special fancy was taken to a particular minister, he received many gifts. Another might be just as efficient, perhaps more consecrated, but if retiring in his manner and diffident about pleading his own needs, he might be left to largely support himself by manual labor.*COOD 90.1*

As we "call to remembrance the former days" of relaxed ideas of order which prevailed among the early advent believers, it makes it clearer now why it required years of patient labor and prayerful study to develop and perfect the system of order that now exists among Seventh-day Adventists.*COOD 90.2*

## 18 DEVELOPMENT OF ORDER

“THAT we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” *Ephesians 4:14-16*.*COOD 91.1*

If the *growth* of the body of Christ-the church-is a growth in “*all things*,” then in that growth there will be seen a system of order such as is essential for the harmonious development of the church. It may be a matter of interest to note the introduction and practical working of the “order and system” which, in the providence of God, have aided in the successful rise of the third angel’s message. The following, from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White, found in “Christian Education,” published about 1894, states some interesting facts relative to church order:-*COOD 91.2*

**The Lord Led in Establishing Order**

“I am sure the Lord has wrought in the organization that has been perfected, and the fact that there are discouraging features in the work should not be thought a sufficient reason for disorganization. Much light was given to us in reference to the organization of churches, and yet we had a hard battle to fight in *perfecting* organization; but the victory was gained at last, and now shall the church be disorganized because of indifference, formality, and pride? Shall we go back to disorder because unconsecrated members of the church have placed upon the work the mold of man, and sought to fashion the church to meet a popular standard?”-*Pages 135, 136*.*COOD 91.3*

**Order Perfect The System of**

The word *perfect* is used as applying to the *system* and *plan* of organization, and not to perfection in the working with those plans, for it clearly states the the *mold of man* had been put upon the work, not because the system of order was imperfect, but because of *indifference, formality, and pride*,-following a form merely as a form, without the vitalizing power of godliness. *COOD 92.1*

**Necessity of Order**

In a Testimony found in the *General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 29, 1892*, the same writer says: “It is nearly forty years since organization was introduced among us as a people. I was one of the number who had an experience in establishing it from the first. I know of the difficulties that had to be met, the evils it was designed to correct; and I have watched its influence in connection with the growth of the cause. At an early stage in the work, God gave us special light upon this point; and this light, together with the lessons that experience has taught us, should be carefully considered.*COOD 92.2*

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization, there would be great confusion, and the work could not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying on the work in new fields, for protecting both the church and ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for other objects, organization was indispensable.”*COOD 92.3*

**God Erected the Structure**

As we “consider the light and experience” in the development of organization, it will lead us to note the difficulties that had to be met, and how the order established met the difficulties. In the *Bulletin* of 1893, we read still further respecting organization: “All this was missionary work of the highest order. Our work was not sustained by large gifts and legacies: for we had few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the order of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard-seed has grown to a great tree. The *system of organization has proved a grand success*.*COOD 92.4*

“Let none entertain the thought, however, that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study, and many prayers for wisdom, that we know God has answered, to effect this structure. It has been built up by his direction through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord, I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled.*COOD 93.1*

“At God’s command, ‘Go forward,’ we advanced when difficulties to be surmounted made the advance seem impossible. We know now how much it has cost to work out God’s plan in the past, which has made us as a people what we are. Then let every on be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing his cause.”-*Bulletins of Jan. 29 and 30, 1893*.*COOD 93.2*

**Disorderly Men Not Needed Now**

From an unpublished Testimony of July, 1894, we quote these words: “Now, just now, is the time when the perils of the last days are thickening around us that we need wise men for counselors, not men who will feel it duty to stir up and create disorder, and who can not possibly give wise counsel, but who can organize and arrange that every stirring up shall bring order out of confusion, and rest and peace in obeying the word of the Lord. Let every man be found in his true place, ready to do some work for the Master, according to his several ability. None should be left to drift to make a vast amount of trouble and confusion.”*COOD 93.3*

**Satan a Disorganizer**

In a Testimony dated Jan. 14, 1894, we read: “O how Satan would rejoice to get in among this people, and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential, and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings, and to refute claims not endorsed by the word of God. We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the *system* of regulation and order. In this way license shall not be given to disorderly elements to control the work at this time. We are living in a time when order, system, and unity of action are most essential. And the truth must bind us together like strong cords in order that no distracted efforts may be witnessed among the workers. If disorderly manifestations appear, we must have discernment to distinguish the spurious from the genuine. Let no messages be proclaimed until they have borne a careful scrutiny in every jot and tittle.”*COOD 94.1*

Again we see that it is the *system* of organization that is recommended. Disorganization would, of course, tend to throw matters in the condition they were in before the *system* was established. We see also that the object to be gained by the system of order is that of unity and harmony in carrying forward the work. So the danger pointed out, should we now disorganize, was the apparent danger when organization and a system of working was brought to the attention of this people at the first.*COOD 94.2*

**Counsel versus Independence**

In “Testimonies of the Church,” No. 33, page 62, these words are found: “One point will have to be guarded, and that is *individual independence*. As soldiers in Christ’s army, there should be *concert of action* in the various departments of the work.”*COOD 94.3*

“The laborers should counsel together. No one is to strike out on his independent judgment, and work according to his own mind, regardless of the counsel of those connected with him. If we think ourselves sufficient to manage the work of God, and depend for success on our wisdom to plan and execute, we may expect defeats and losses; for they will surely come.”-*Gospel Workers (1892), 355.COOD 95.1*

## A Critical Position

It can readily be seen that a people who had been thrust out from organized bodies, and placed where each had to think and act for himself, and who had become accustomed to a sort of independence in thought and action, would be in danger of confusion in labor under the third angel's message, unless some *system* were established for the promotion of harmony of action. This is the object that was first presented, and which has been kept in view as the different phases of the work have been developed. It is not a plan calculated to prevent people from searching for truth and seeking divine guidance for themselves; but is an arrangement which should promote unity among a multitude of thinkers.*COOD 95.2*

**General Conference the Highest Authority**

The matter of private judgment and union with the body is plainly stated in *Testimony for the Church 1:492*, published in the year 1875: “I have been shown that no man’s judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any one man, but when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority God has upon earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered.”*COOD 95.3*

These words are not be understood that a conference of men who were led by human wisdom and had the “mold of men,” was the “highest authority of God on earth.” Nay, verily; for such assemblies have been declared “*not* the voice of God.” It is rather an assembly of representatives of the work, “gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ” with them (*1 Corinthians 5:4, 5*), whose decisions are ratified by the Lord.*COOD 95.4*

## 19 DEVELOPMENT OF ORDER-CONTINUED

“NOW I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” *1 Corinthians 1:10*. This scripture clearly shows the Lord’s desire for unity and harmony among those who give instruction to his people, that they be not themselves instigators of confusion.*COOD 97.1*

**Confusion After 1844**

After the close of the prophetic period in 1844, until the light of the third angel's message was seen, there was confusion among the believers. This confusion, to some extent, existed until they saw the real "present truth," and became settled in the belief of it. The Lord was, meanwhile, manifesting the true gift of prophecy in connection with the unfolding light of the third angel's message. Those who were willing to accept his guidance, now had the privilege of coming into that "unity of the faith" which the true gifts of the Spirit are designed to promote. *Ephesians 4:11-16*.*COOD 97.2*

**Confusion at Volney, N. Y., in 1848**

To illustrate the difficulties to be overcome, brought about by the confused ideas of those who had just accepted the Sabbath truth, we refer to the first general gathering of our people in central New York. In August, 1848, they requested Elder and Mrs. White and Elder Joseph Bates to come from Massachusetts to give them instruction in the truths of the message. Concerning this meeting we read that “about thirty-five were present,-all that could be collected in that part of the State. But of this number hardly two were agreed. Some were holding serious errors, and each strenuously urged his own views, declaring that they were according to the Scriptures”-*Testimonies for the Church 1:86*. The Lord, through the gift of prophecy, instructed this people respecting the truth in contrast with their errors, and when that series of meetings closed they were a united company.*COOD 97.3*

As to the kind of instruction given at that time to correct prevailing errors and save the ranks from confusion, we read in “Experience and Views,” pages 53, 54, published 1851: “Such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen were the principal subjects on which the messengers [ministers] should dwell.”*COOD 98.1*

**Cause of the Confusion**

We read in the same book of the necessity of harmony among the teachers: “Some who have formerly run deep into fanaticism would be the first now to run before God sends them, before they are purified from their past errors: having error mixed with the truth, they would feed the flock of God with it, and if they were suffered to go on, the flock would become sickly, and distraction and death would follow.”-*Ibid., page 53*.*COOD 98.2*

This being the situation we can readily see that the very first thing “wanting” in establishing “order” among the Seventh-day Adventists was some regulation by which the flock might know who were approved ministers, who-not thus approved-were liable to teach them “pernicious errors.” About the year 1852, the Lord gave the following instruction, which was first published in “Supplement to Experience and Views,” in the summer of 1853:-*COOD 98.3*

**Self-sent Laborers**

“Those men who are not called of God, are generally the very ones that are the most confident that they are so called, and that their labors are very important. They go into the field, and do not generally exert a good influence; yet in some places they have a measure of success, and this leads them and others to think that they are surely called of God. It is not a positive evidence that men are called of God because they have some success; for angels of God are now moving upon the hearts of his honest children to enlighten their understanding as to the present truth, that they may lay hold upon it and live. And even if self-sent men put themselves where God does not put them and profess to be teachers, and souls receive the truth by hearing them talk it, this is no evidence that they are called of God. The souls who receive the truth from them, receive it to be brought into trial and bondage, as they afterward find that these men were not standing in the counsel of God.”-*Pages 13, 14*.*COOD 99.1*

**Church Decides on Teachers**

"I saw that the church should feel their responsibility, and should look carefully and attentively at the lives, qualifications, and general course of those who profess to be teachers. If unmistakable evidence is not given that God has called them, and the 'woe' is upon them if they heed not this call, it is the duty of the church to act, and let it be known that they are not acknowledged as teachers by the church. This is the only course the church can take in order to be clear in this matter; for the burden lies upon them.*COOD 99.2*

"I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. Said he, 'The church must flee to God's word, and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.' This is indispensably necessary to bring the church into the unity of the faith."-*Ibid., page 15*.*COOD 99.3*

**Ordination of Ministers**

After speaking of how the apostolic church was troubled with false teachers, and of the course they pursued to remedy the difficulty, the Testimony continues in these words: “I saw that we are no more secure from false teachers now than they were in the apostle’s days; and, if we do no more, we should take as special measures as they did to secure the peace, harmony, and union of the flock. We have their example, and should follow it. Brethren of experience and sound minds should assemble, and, following the word of God and the sanction of the Holy Spirit, should, with fervent prayer, lay hands upon those who have given full proof that they have received their commission of God, and set them apart to devote themselves entirely to his work. This act would show the sanction of the church to their going forth as messengers to carry the most solemn message ever given to men.”-*Ibid., page 16*.*COOD 100.1*

**Present Need of Order**

Another statement is found in “Supplement to Experience and Views,” page 12, which says: “The Lord has shown that gospel order has been too much feared and neglected. Formality should be shunned: but, in so doing order should not be neglected. There is order in heaven. There was order in the church when Christ was upon earth, and after his departure, order was strictly observed among his apostles. And now in these last days, while God is bringing his children into the unity of the faith there is more real need of order than ever before; for, as God unites his children, Satan and his evil angels are busy to prevent this unity and to destroy it.”*COOD 100.2*

**Cards of Recommendation**

By comparing dates, it appears there was two years from the time "Experience and Views" was published until the "Supplement" appeared-from 1851 to 1853. The latter called for action. The delay to act was that all might understand the subject. The fear was the course those would pursue who claimed "freedom to go, with no restraint." From 1853, the plan adopted was that of giving the ministers who had proved their gift, and were evidently approved of the Lord, and in harmony with all the work, a card recommending them to the fellowship of the Lord's people everywhere, simply stating that they were approved in the work of the gospel ministry. These cards were dated, and signed by two of the leading ministers, known by our people to be leaders in the work. The one given to the writer, in January, 1853, was signed, "In behalf of the church,-"JAMES WHITE, "JOSEPH BATES." *Leading Ministers."COOD 100.3*

**Liberty Demanded**

Of course those who claimed “liberty to do as they pleased,” to “preach what they pleased,” and to “go when and where they they pleased,” without “consultation with any one,” failed to get cards of commendation. They, with their sympathizers, drew off and commenced a warfare against those whom they claimed were “depriving them of their liberty.” Knowing that it was the Testimonies that had prompted us as a people to act, to establish “order,” these opponents soon turned their warfare against instruction from that source, claiming that “when they got that gift out of the way, the message would go unrestrained to its ‘loud cry.’ “*COOD 101.1*

**Withdrawal of the Discontented**

Our people stood faithfully at their work, following the light the Lord had given, leaving the opposers alone, and the result is seen, as given in The Review and Herald, December 6, 1854, where Elder James*COOD 101.2*

White speaks of the situation as follows: “There never has been such strong union as seems to exist with the remnant at the present time, and there seems to be a general waking up to the work of God. The late ‘scourge,’ to which some refer in this number [meaning the opposition party], will prove one of the greatest blessings to the cause. It will put the people of God on their guard in their future course, and free them from some who have been a burden to the cause, and whom they could not reform.” And so with the establishment of point number *one* in church order, we could see, in one year, the blessed fruit predicted in the union of the flock.*COOD 102.1*

## 20 SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY

“DO ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” *1 Corinthians 9:13, 14*.*COOD 103.1*

## Outside Interest Increasing

As already stated, the action taken by our people in 1853 to send forth only approved ministers, resulted in *unity* among the believers. With this unity came also increased zeal to bear the truth to others. At the same time there was, on the part of the people, an increased desire to hear the truth. In the summer of 1854, Seventh-day Adventists first began to use large tents in which to hold meetings. It was a rare thing in those days to see tents used for such a purpose, consequently crowds of people came to the tent-meetings.*COOD 103.2*

**Demand for Continuous Labors**

This increased interest in the message called for ministers who could devote their whole time to gospel work. This they could not do without some means of support besides their own hand labor. No *system* of finance had yet been established, so no salaries were then held out for their encouragement. In 1851, the following Testimony respecting laborers was given: “They will have to go out by faith, trusting in him who has called them to his work, and he will open the way before them, as far as will be for their own good and his glory. Jesus, the great teacher and pattern, had not where to lay his head. His life was one of toil, sorrow, and suffering; he then gave himself for us. Those who, in Christ’s stead, beseech souls to be reconciled to God, and who hope to reign with Christ in glory, must expect to be partakers of his sufferings here.”-*“Experience and Views,” page 54.*COOD 103.3

**Sacrifice Tobacco, Tea, and Coffee**

At this time ways were suggested how the believers might financially aid in the Lord's cause: "All those who are indulging self by using the filthy weed tobacco, should lay it aside, and put their means to a better use. Those make a sacrifice who deprive themselves of some gratification, and take the means they formerly used to gratify the appetite, and put it into the treasury of the Lord.... If all would study to be more economical in their articles of dress, depriving themselves of some things which are not actually necessary, and should lay aside such useless and injurious things as tea and coffee, giving to the cause what these cost, they would receive more blessing here, and a reward in heaven."-*Ibid., page 35.*COOD 104.1

**Liberality Abused**

This instruction for a time led to quite liberal contributions of money; but some of the self-sent laborers abused these liberalities. The Testimony said of this class: “A bad example has been set by some accepting large donations, and not giving the least caution to those who had means not to use it too freely and carelessly.... Those who had means were thrown into great perplexity.... Others have been affected by these things, and have not felt the need of economy, of denying themselves, and putting into the treasury of the Lord.”-*Testimony of June 2, 1853*.*COOD 104.2*

**Confidence Restored**

As *order* was established in the ministry, separating from the body those who had abused the liberalities of the brethren, confidence in the work was fully restored. When calls were made for money to purchase tents, for tent-meeting and laborers' expenses, for a power press and engine, for a book fund, etc, there were liberal responses. The work advanced so rapidly that at the close of 1857 the number of Seventh-day Adventists had doubled, and the office property of the Review and Herald had increased from seven hundred dollars to five thousand dollars.*COOD 104.3*

This, in kind, seemed like the zeal and enthusiasm of Israel in the wilderness, at the time of the building of the tabernacle, when their gifts which they brought "was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much." *Exodus 36:7*. When this structure was erected there was a continual expense for the general offerings of the tabernacle, and for the support of those who gave themselves entirely to the service, so the Lord introduced to his people his *plan* for securing means for this purpose.*COOD 105.1*

**Satan's Council**

Satan was displeased to see the cause flourish as order was being established, so he called a council of his angels to devise a plan to hinder the work. Of this we read: "I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who are looking for Christ's second appearing, and keeping all the commandments of God.... Said he, 'the sect of Sabbath-keepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to his service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects.... Present every plausible excuse to those who have means, lest they hand it out. Control the money matters if you can, and drive their ministers to want and distress. This will weaken their courage and zeal. Battle every inch of the ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character.'"-*Spiritual Gifts 1:128, 129*.*COOD 105.2*

This Testimony explained to us some things that hitherto seemed strange,-why the zeal and liberality of our people from 1853 to 1855, should drop to such a low ebb in 1856 and 1857 that even many in the ministry were being driven to hand labor for their own support, was a question hard to solve.*COOD 106.1*

**Self-Interest First**

A Testimony in Volume I of the “Testimonies” shows the outward working of Satan’s plan, where it says of some professing Sabbath-keepers: “They make self and self-interest first, and then they do for the cause what they think they can as well as not. Such a sacrifice, I saw, is lame, and not accepted of God. All should be interested to do their utmost to advance the cause. I saw that those who have no property, but have strength of body, are accountable to God for their strength. They should be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit; they should not leave those that have possessions to do all the sacrificing. I saw that they can sacrifice, and that it is their duty to do so, as well as those who have property....*COOD 106.2*

“Selfishness and covetousness can be overcome.... By laying all their possessions upon the altar of God, and when they see where means are needed to advance the cause of truth and to help the widow, the fatherless, and afflicted, they should give cheerfully, and thus lay up treasure in heaven.”-*Pages 115, 142*.*COOD 106.3*

**Scripture Plan for Ministerial Support**

Liberality on the part of our people went to a very low ebb in the winter of 1857-1858. At that time the following Testimony was given, directing us to search the Scriptures, for therein a plan is given for the support of the work-a plan which our people should adopt: “The least that has been required of Christians in past days, is to possess a spirit of liberality, and to consecrate to the Lord a portion of all their increase. Every true Christian has considered this a privilege, but some who have borne the name only, have considered it a task; the grace and love of God had never wrought in them the good work, or they would gladly have advanced the cause of their Redeemer. But Christians who are living in the last days, and who are waiting for their Lord, are required to do even more than this. God requires them to sacrifice.”*COOD 106.4*

“I was pointed back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God laid the plan by the descent of his Holy Spirit, and that by the gift of prophecy he counseled his people in regard to a system of benevolence. All were to share in this work of imparting of their carnal things to those who ministered unto them in spiritual things.”-*Testimonies for the Church 1:170, 190.COOD 107.1*

**A Bible Class**

In the month of April 1858, a Bible class was conducted in Battle Creek, Mich., by Elder J. N. Andrews. Its object was to learn what the Scriptures teach concerning the support of the gospel ministry, and resulted in developing the “plan of systematic benevolence, on the tithing principle.”*COOD 107.2*

The next year the Testimony on this subject was as follows: “God is well pleased with the efforts of his people in trying to move with system and order in his work on earth.... God is leading his people in the *plan* of systematic benevolence, and this is one of the very points to which God is bringing up his people which will cut the closest with some. With them this cuts off the right arm, and plucks out the right eye, while to others it is a great relief. To noble, generous souls the demands upon them seem very small, and they can not be content to do so little.”-*Ibid., 191*.*COOD 107.3*

## 21 LEGAL ORGANIZATION

“ALL things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all thing are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.” *1 Corinthians 10:23, 24*.*COOD 108.1*

## The Tithing Principle Adopted

An address setting forth the "*tithing* principle" as the best method of gathering funds for the support of the ministry was published in the *Review* of Feb. 6, 1859. This same address had been adopted by a vote of the Battle Creek church, Jan. 26, 1859. The proposed plan was so reasonable and consistent that it was readily accepted and acted upon by the generous and liberal hearted. It was welcomed as a measure well calculated to give greater efficiency to the work of the ministry. Another address on the same subject was read at a general gathering of Sabbath-keepers in Battle Creek, June 3-6, 1859. It was adopted by a vote of that body, and recommended to all as a *plan* to be acted upon at once. The majority of our people began immediately to carry out the principle. Some, however, delayed, and the principal cause of such delays was well set forth in the following Testimony on -*COOD 108.2*

**Tithes and Offerings**

“Rob not God by withholding from him your tithes and offerings. It is the first sacred duty to render to God a suitable proportion. Let no one throw in his claims and lead you to rob God. Let not your children steal your offerings from God’s altar for their own benefit....*COOD 108.3*

“I saw that in the arrangement of systematic benevolence, hearts will be tested and proved. It is a constant, living test. It brings one to understand his own heart, to see whether the truth or the love of the world predominates. Here is a test for the naturally selfish and covetous. They will put down their possessions at very low figures. Here they dissemble. Said the angel, ‘Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.’ Angels are watching the development of character, and the acts of such are carried to heaven by the heavenly messengers. Some will be visited of God for these things, and their increase will be brought down to their figures. ‘There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that witholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself....’*COOD 108.4*

“This *tithing* system, I saw would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart. If the brethren ... have this matter presented before them in its true bearing, and are left to decide for themselves, they will see wisdom and order in the *tithing system*.”-*Vol. I, pages 221, 222, 237*.*COOD 109.1*

With a slight modification of keeping account of actual income and giving one tenth of that to the cause of God, the system introduced in 1858 is still carried out. It supplies a steady flow of means into the treasury for the gospel work. Note that from the first the Testimony called it *tithes* that should be rendered to the Lord.*COOD 109.2*

**Publishing Work Advancing**

As the message advanced, and the number of laborers constantly increased, the Lord in his providence, as we have seen, led us to an effective Bible plan for the sustenance of the ministry. With the increase in numbers came a demand for, and increase in, facilities for printing and publishing the truth, and a corresponding accumulation of property at the Review and Herald Office. That branch of the work started in July, 1849, by Elder James White, printing the first number of a paper, *The Present Truth*, with money earned mowing grass, had grown until now there were several thousand invested in the business. It became needful for some one to take the responsibility of this in the initiative. As the business had grown under Elder White's judicious management, the *plant* and *good-will* of the business was legally his. But he did not wish it so understood. He called it "the property of the church." In this position was an illustration of the principle expressed in the text at the head of this chapter, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." He desired to place the matter in the hands of the church, but the church was not in a condition to *legally* hold property. This brought us, as a people, to a point where we again recognized that something was "wanting." To make a move by virtue of which the church could receive and lawfully hold its *real estate* and other property, was a *third* step in the matter of order.*COOD 109.3*

**How Can We Hold Church Property?**

In The Review and Herald, February 23, 1860, Elder James White, in an article on this subject said: “We hope, however, that the time is not far distant when this people will be in that position necessary to be able to get church property insured, hold their meeting-houses in a proper manner, that those persons making wills, and desiring to do so, can appropriate a portion to the publishing department.... We call on preachers and leading brethren to give the matter their attention. If any object to our suggestions, will they please write out a plan on which we as a people can act.”*COOD 110.1*

**First Answer on Church Property**

In the *Review* of March 8, 1860, under the head of "legal organization," the writer made the following statement in response to Elder White's request: "What I understand is necessary to remedy all the defects in this matter, is to organize in such a manner that we can hold church property legally. Then the property could be held in the name of the church." Money could be borrowed in the same way, and no one individual would have to take a burden upon himself which he ought not to bear. *COOD 110.2*

"If it is wrong to protect *church property*, why is it not wrong for individuals to hold any property legally? If it is not wrong to hold farms and village lots in a lawful manner, neither is it wrong to hold church property in the same way. I should think the same principle is involved in both cases." *COOD 111.1*

**Making a Name**

It may seem strange at the present time to those unacquainted with the situation of our cause in 1860, that in the *Review* of March 22, appeared an article from a brother in the faith, much esteemed, in which he stated that what was desired by Elders White and Loughborough, was to “make a name so as to be like the nations” round them. Like the builders of the tower of Babel, he claimed that in the movement proposed for “*legally* holding church property” these brethren were going into Babylon, “uniting church and state,” etc.*COOD 111.2*

In the next two numbers of the *Review*, Elder White fully answered the brother, showing that while it is wrong to resort to the civil arm to enforce the worship of God, “the Lord’s goods can be managed in this state of things only according to the laws of the country.” And it was “vain to talk of church property, if the church is not in a position to hold it legally.”*COOD 111.3*

**Presumption and Trust**

The position of the brother opposing “legal organization” was that we should “trust the Lord in these matters;” that “the Lord would not allow the world to take advantage of us, because the property was the Lord’s own property devoted to his service;” that “those pleading for *legal organization* showed lack of *faith* in the Lord,” etc., he seemed to forget what the Testimony had said about Satan’s counsel to his angels to keep money matters in their control, and out of the hands of his people.*COOD 111.4*

On this brother’s case the Lord was pleased to speak to his people in these words: “I saw that in temporal matters Brother------was too easy and negligent, He has lacked energy, considering it a virtue to leave to the Lord that which the Lord has left to him. It is only in cases of great emergency that the Lord interposes for us. We have a work to do, burdens and responsibilities to bear, and in thus doing we gain an experience.*COOD 112.1*

**God's Opportunity**

"The Lord requires his people to use their reason, and not lay it aside for impressions. His work will be intelligible to all his children. His teaching will be such as will commend itself to the understanding of intelligent minds. It is calculated to elevate the mind. God's power is not manifested upon every occasion. Man's necessity is God's opportunity."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:230*.*COOD 112.2*

Not only did the Testimonies speak plain on this case, and say "God's people are justified in securing church property in a lawful manner," but he left the conscientious brother to make a move, in harmony with his own position, which showed the folly of his claim. Through such presumption-leaving the Lord to defend his claims in court-he lost the sound title of his own home farm.*COOD 112.3*

## A Council on Legal Organization

From Sept. 28 to Oct. 1, 1860, there was a general meeting of our people from Michigan and adjoining States, held in Battle Creek. At this time there was a full and free discussion, and a careful consideration of the subject of *legal organization* for the purpose of holding the office of publication and other church property,-meeting-houses, etc. As the result of these deliberations it was voted unanimously to legally organize a publishing association, and a commmittee of five was elected by those assembled, that such a corporation might be formed as soon as practicable.*COOD 112.4*

**Taking a Name**

As soon as a move should be made to organize, a name would need to be taken for the corporation. This, therefore, led to a consideration of the name by which we should be known. Some were in favor of the name “Church of God.” This was objected to on the ground that it gave none of distinctive features of our faith, while the name “Seventh-day Adventist” would not only set forth our faith in the near coming of Christ, but would also show that we are observers of the seventh-day Sabbath. When this matter was put to vote, only one person voted against the name “Seventh-day Adventist,” and he shortly after decided in favor of it.*COOD 113.1*

**Publishing Association Organized**

The Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association was organized May 3, 1861. This was the first of the various legal organizations formed by this people. The formation of such corporation was point number *three* in establishing, in God's opening providence, the "order and system" of managing the work of the third angel's message. All can now see the necessity for such corporations, and may wonder that it was not always seen by us. But let none loose the practical lesson contained in this case. While we should most earnestly seek the Lord for divine guidance, we must remember that as he works in us as his instruments, we too have a work to do. We are not to expect him to do what he has left for us to do and what he "works in us to do."*COOD 113.2*

## 22 STATE CONFERENCES

“IF a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden.” *Galatians 6:3-5*.*COOD 114.1*

**Self-Confidence Dangerous**

In “Testimonies for the Church” No. 31, page 243, is the following comment on this text: “The apostle adds a caution to the independent and self-confident.... He who considers himself superior in judgment and experience to his brethren, and despises their counsel and admonition, evinces that he is in a dangerous delusion.”*COOD 114.2*

**Counsel Leads to Unity**

From the earliest period of what we denominate the third angel's message, the Testimonies have presented to this people the importance of unity in the work, and the counseling of the laborers together in order that this unity might be secured, as the following quotation from "Experience and Views" (1851) will show: "I saw that the shepherds should consult those in whom they have reason to have confidence, those who have been in all the messages, and are firm in all the present truth, before they advocate new points of importance which they may think the Bible sustains. Then the shepherds will he perfectly united, and the union of the shepherds will be felt by the church."-page 52.*COOD 114.3*

**Press Together**

In 1855 the following Testimony was given: “There is too much of an independence of spirit indulged in among the messengers. This must be laid aside, and there must be a drawing together of the servants of God. There has been too much of a spirit to ask, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ Said the angel, Yea, thou art thy brother’s keeper. Thou shouldest have a watchful care for thy brother, be interested for his welfare, and cherish a kind, loving spirit towards him. Press together, press together.”-*Testimonies for the Church 1:113, 114*.*COOD 114.4*

Again: “Much evil will be avoided if the ministers of Christ will be of one mind, united in their plans of action, and united in effort.”-*Ibid., 212, 213*.*COOD 115.1*

**Leading Out a People**

The following was published in 1858: “God is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals, here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead.... But some restless spirits do not more than half do up their work. As the angel leads them, they get in haste for something new, and rush on without divine guidance, and thus bring confusion and discord into the ranks. They do not speak or act in harmony with the body.”-*Ibid., 207*.*COOD 115.2*

**Satan's Effort to Scatter**

In 1860, the following Testimony was given: "As we near the close of time Satan comes down with great power knowing that his time is short. Especially will his power be exercised upon the remnant. He will war against them, and seek to divide and scatter them, that they may grow weak and be overthrown. The people of God should move understandingly, and should be united in their efforts. They should be of the same mind, and of the same judgment; then their efforts will not be scattered, but will tell forcibly in the upbuilding of the cause of present truth. Order must be observed, and there must be union in maintaining order, or Satan will take the advantage."-*Ibid., 210*.*COOD 115.3*

**Order in Ministerial Labors**

The force of these quotations will be more clearly seen when the reader gets before his mind a view of the situation. Until the year 1861, there was no organized conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The Testimonies all along had been speaking of plans and the need of “counseling together” to secure unity in the work, and save confusion. There was no system by which the labor of a minister could be regulated, or who should labor in a specified field. Sometimes three ministers would be with one small company at one time, neither knowing that the others were to be there, and this, too, in a place where there was no special need of even one minister. The labors of a minister were often scattered from place to place with no concentrated effort. Thus it was becoming more and more evident to our people that something was “wanting” to remedy this growing difficulty.*COOD 116.1*

## Yearly Meetings for Counsel

In the *Review* of July 21, 1859, appeared an article from Elder James White, in which was first suggested the plan that each State hold a yearly meeting in which the brethren could plan for the work in their respective States, that, in place of the confusion which too frequently existed, order might be observed. As a result of Elder White's suggestions, compared with instructions given in the Testimonies, the different States, where the message was established, beginning with 1860, held, in their respective fields, yearly meetings for counsel, to plan for the work of the ministers. The adoption of this mode of working we will denominate point number *four* in church order. The practical utility of such councils, meeting together to prayerfully plan for the work, and the comparison of ideas and methods, must commend itself to all.*COOD 116.2*

**Opening Plans to One Another**

Clearer and clearer have been the Testimonies borne to us respecting the harmony that should exist among the laborers, as shown in the following quotation: As the Lord's workman, you are to open your plans to one another. These plans must be carefully and prayerfully considered, because those who do not do this the Lord will leave to stumble in their own supposed wisdom and superior greatness."-*Unpublished Testimony, 1898*.*COOD 117.1*

"Many want to do things after their own style; they object to consultation, and are impatient under leadership. Well matured plans are needed in the service of God. Common sense is an excellent thing in the worship of the Lord. The thinking powers should be consecrated to Christ, and ways and means should be devised to serve him best."-*Testimonies for the Church 4:71*.*COOD 117.2*

**Defeating Satan's Plans**

"The peril which threatens our usefulness, and which will prove our ruin, if not seen and overcome, is selfishness-placing a higher estimate upon our plans, our opinions, and our labors, and moving independently of our brethren. 'Counsel together,' have been the words repeated by the angel again and again.... Satan may move through one man's mind to warp things out of their proper channel; he may succeed with two who view things in a similar light; but with several minds enlisted, there is greater safety against his wiles. Every plan will be more liable to be viewed from all sides, every advance will be more carefully studied, so that no enterprise will be so likely to be entered upon which will bring confusion and perplexity, and defeat the work in which we are engaged. In union there is strength: in division there is weakness and defeat."-*Special Testimony, No. 5, page 3*.*COOD 117.3*

"Companies should be gathered together to call upon God for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that the people of God may know how to plan and devise and execute the work."-Ibid., No. 2, 19.*COOD 117.4*

**Let Plans be Known**

“Let your plans be closely investigated; and with earnest prayer commit your case to him who knoweth all things. Council together. Let not the whisperings of your own mind or of other minds close the door of your heart against the counsel of the Lord’s servants.”-*Ibid., No. 7, 48, 49*.*COOD 118.1*

“Committees of counsel, as far as possible, should let the people understand their plans, that the judgment of the church may sustain their efforts. Many of the church-members are prudent, and have many other excellent qualities of mind. It is proper that their wisdom should be exercised, that others may be aroused in reference to the great question to be considered. Many may be awakened to the fact that they should have deeper insight into the work of God.”-*Ibid., No. 3, 49, 50*.*COOD 118.2*

**God Requires Rules and Regulations**

“Never allow any one’s ideas to unsettle your faith in regard to the order and harmony which should exist in the church. Many of you do not see all things clearly.... The God of heaven is a God of order, and he requires all his followers to have rules and regulations, to preserve order.”-“Testimonies for the Church,” No. 32, page 30.*COOD 118.3*

“There is order in heaven; and there should be system and order upon the earth, that the work may move forward without confusion, and fanaticism. Our brethren have been working to this end; but while some of our ministers continually bear the burden of souls, and ever seek to bring the people in spiritual attainments, those who are not so conscientious and who have not carried the cross of Christ nor felt the value of souls as reflected from Calvary, will in teaching and educating others in the mechanical working, become formal and powerless themselves, and bring no Saviour to the people.”-*Testimonies for the Church 4:601, 602*.*COOD 118.4*

While these Testimonies teach the necessity of order and organization in the advancement of the cause, they as distinctly show that these forms, separated from a body of living members of Christ, avail nothing.*COOD 119.1*

# 23 DELEGATE CONFERENCE AND CHURCH ORGANIZATION

“THEY determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.” *Acts 15:2*.*COOD 120.1*

**The Jerusalem Council**

Concerning this gathering and its deliberations we read in *The Spirit of Prophecy 3:376*, that it "was composed of the founders of the Jewish and Gentile churches. Elders from Jerusalem and Antioch were present; and the most influential churches were represented.... The entire body of Christians were not called to vote upon the question. The apostles and elders-men of influence and judgment-framed and issued the decree."*COOD 120.2*

In the Testimonies we are counseled to carefully study the experiences of the past which led to the establishment of order among Seventh-day Adventists. In tracing these in the order of their occurrence, we now come to the *fifth* and *sixth* steps, which were conferences composed of duly elected delegates, and church organization.*COOD 120.3*

**How to Avoid Confusion**

We were instructed that it was God's will that order should be established to avoid confusion. When discordant elements came in, it led to prayerful study whether action should not be taken to remedy this difficulty. We were taught that the angel of God had said, that in order to shut the door against such discord we must "flee to the word of God, and become established upon order."*COOD 120.4*

**Annoyed by Advocates of Freedom**

In our assemblies, in those early times, when, through lack of proper order and organization, no restraint was upon any one-where one claimed just as much right to occupy the time and direct affairs in our public meetings as another-we were greatly annoyed by turbulent-spirited men. At one of our gatherings in Battle Creek, Mich., a minister from another denomination, who had lately begun the observance of the Sabbath, a stranger to all of us, actually undertook to open and control the meeting. In the gathering of 1860, when it was finally decided to legally organize, we were much annoyed with advocates of "*freedom*."*COOD 120.5*

All this led to a careful study of what was "wanting" to promote union and harmony in our yearly State meetings. Taking the Scriptures, and noting the councils of the Jewish church upon questions that interested all the congregation, we observed that the action taken seemed to be by elders and rulers elected by the people. So also in the Christian church, as we have seen in their proceedings at Jerusalem on the question of circumcision.*COOD 121.1*

In *Testimonies for the Church 1:652*, we read that "the travels of the children of Israel are faithfully described, .... Their perfect organization and special order, their sin in murmuring, ... and rebellions, ... this faithful picture is hung up before us, as a warning lest we follow their example of disobedience, and fall like them."*COOD 121.2*

The same writer, speaking of the apostolic church, said, "We should take as special measures as they did to secure the peace, harmony, and union of the flock."-*"Supplement to Experience and Views," page 16*.*COOD 121.3*

**Bible Class on Order**

In an address delivered by Elder James White before the conference assembled in Battle Creek, in April, 1861, published in the *Review* of June 11, of the same year, we find that a more complete organization of our churches was called for. Recommendations were made and adopted by those assembled favoring this, and a committee of nine ministers was selected, who were requested to hold a Bible class and seek light upon this subject, and that the same be published in the *Review*. Their report was prepared, which set forth the Scriptural testimony on church order and church officers. Elder White also called attention to the propriety of elected delegate representation from the several States in a general conference, and similar representation of churches in their State conferences. In reality this was the first suggestion of the plan of having delegates duly elected for our general associations.*COOD 121.4*

**Liberty Pleaders Called Order "Popery"**

One of the principal claims made by those who warred against organization was that it "abridged their liberty and independence, and that if one stood clear before the Lord that was all the organization needed," etc. Upon this point, when church order was contested, we read: "Satan well knows that success only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host.... He deceives even the professed people of God, and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality; that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course.... All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:650*.*COOD 122.1*

**Arguments of Opponents**

When those who back in the “sixties” witnessed the battle of establishing church order now hear persons, as conscientious no doubt as those back there, utter almost the identical words that were then used by those opposing order, it need not be wondered that they fear the result of such statements as the following: “Perfect unity means absolute independence,-each one knowing for himself. Why, we could not have outward disorganization if we all believed in the Lord.... This question of organization is a simple thing. All there is to it is for each individual to give himself to the Lord, and then the Lord will do with him just what he wants to, and that all the time.... Our only safety, under God, is to go back to the place where God is able to take a multitude of people and make them one, without parliamentary rules, without committee work, without legislation of any kind.”-*General Conference Bulletin of 1899*.*COOD 122.2*

**God Requires Rules**

Superficially considered, this might seem to be a blessed state, a heaven indeed; but, as already noted on a preceding page, we read of heaven itself and its leadings that "the god of heaven is a god of order, and he requires all his followers to have rules and regulations to preserve order."-*"Testimonies for the Church," No. 32, page 30.*COOD 123.1

The following is what the Lord has said on the subject: "One point will have to be guarded, and that is individual independence. As soldiers of in Christ's army, there should be concert of action in the various departments of the work...." "Followers of Christ will not act independently one of another."-*"Testimonies for the Church," No. 33, pages 62, 63.*COOD 123.2

**Danger of Cultivating Independence**

The danger of cultivating a spirit of independence is thus stated: “The less of the meekness and lowliness of Christ the human agent has in his spirit and character, the more he sees perfection in his own methods, and imperfection in the methods of others. Our only safety is to watch unto prayer, and to counsel together, believing that God will keep our brethren as well as ourselves, for there is no respect of persons with him.”-*Special Testimony, No. 3, page 19*.*COOD 123.3*

**God's Order**

In a communication, dated Jan. 14, 1894, we are thus counseled: "Why not keep steadily at work in the lines that God has given us? Why not walk in the clear lines he has revealed; and in place of tearing to pieces that which God has built up, work on the side of Jesus Christ? ... We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of regulation and order. In this way license shall not be given to disorderly elements to control the work at this time."*COOD 123.4*

## Church Covenant

The summer of 1861 was not only important because of the “Civil War” in the United States, but many important moves were being considered in connection with the cause of truth. So important were the times that a second general gathering of our people that year was held in October. On the sixth day of the month the Michigan Conference was organized by the election of a chairman, a secretary, and executive committee of three. By vote the conference recommended that the churches organize, adopting the following as a church covenant: “We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together as a church, taking the name Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ.” A committee was appointed to prepare an address formulating plans for organizing churches. This address appeared in the *Review* of Oct. 15, 1861.*COOD 124.1*

The plan and principles of organization set forth in the address mentioned in this chapter, are so well stated in an article from Elder James White, in the *Review* of Jan. 4, 1881, that we quote them here:-*COOD 124.2*

**Design of Organization**

“Organization was designed to secure unity of action, and as a protection from imposture. It was never intended as a scourge to compel obedience, but, rather, for the protection of the people of God. Christ does not drive his people; he calls them....*COOD 124.3*

“Christ never designed that human minds should be molded for heaven by the influence merely of other human minds. ‘The head of every man is Christ.’ His part is to lead, and to mold, and to stamp his own image upon the heirs of eternal glory. However important organization may be for the protection of the church, and to secure harmony of action, it must not come in to take the discipline from the hands of the Master....*COOD 124.4*

“Those who drafted the form of organization adopted by Seventh-day Adventists, labored to incorporate into it, as far as possible, the simplicity of expression and form found in the New Testament. The more of the spirit of the gospel manifested, and the more simple, the more efficient the system.*COOD 125.1*

**The Supervision in the Established Order**

“The General Conference takes the general supervision of the work in all its branches, including State conferences. The State conference takes the supervision of all branches of the work in the State, including the churches in the State. And the church is a body of Christians associated together with the simple covenant to keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*COOD 125.2*

“The officers of a local church are servants of that church, and not lords, to rule over it with church force. ‘He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.’ *Matthew 23:11*. These officers should set examples of patience, watchfulness, prayer, kindness, and liberality, to the members of the church, and should manifest a good degree of that love to those they serve, exhibited in the life and teachings of our Lord.”*COOD 125.3*

**Ministers' Credentials**

The Michigan Conference is the session of Oct. 6, 1861, decided that its ministers should carry papers of recognition, consisting of a certificate of ordination, and credentials signed by the chairman and secretary of the conference, which credentials should be renewed annually.*COOD 125.4*

## 24 CONFERENCE ADDRESS ON ORGANIZATION

THE “Conference address” referred to in the previous chapter, is as follows: “The subject of organization having been referred to us by the late General Conference, with the request that we hold a Bible class thereon, and address you through the *Review*, we have accordingly had the subject under investigation, and submit the following thoughts for your consideration:-*COOD 126.1*

## Church Organization

“Of the necessity of organization, at this late period in the discussion of the subject, it is unnecessary for us to speak. That division of the subject which has been especially referred to us, embraces the following points: 1. Manner of organizing a church; 2. Officers and their duties; 3. The reception of members; and, 4. Letters of commendation.*COOD 126.2*

**Do Not Hastily Organize**

“Where bodies of believers are brought out on the truth in new places, we would not recommend the immediate formation of a church. In such cases let a leader be appointed (this can perhaps best be done by the evangelist when he raises up the church), and let social meetings be continued till such time as the individuals become thoroughly acquainted with each other, and ascertain with whom they can have fellowship, and who are qualified for the important duties of officers of the church. As to the particular manner of organizing a church, when the proper time comes, we shall be allowed to avail ourselves of the experience of several ministers who have already adopted the following plan, and testify that it works well.*COOD 126.3*

## Plans First Followed

"Let the minister request all those who propose to enter into church order, to stand upon their feet, till it is ascertained whether perfect fellowship exists among them. [1]This form was soon changed, and a list of names was written, each one inspecting, and making a cross against any name they questioned, such name being treated as above. Still later others adopted the plan of talking out the grounds of church fellowship, then taking three or five who endorsed the principles, and were in fellowship, as a *nucleus* and voting in others, one by one, as they endorsed the principles, and declared themselves in fellowship with those already received. This is the plan more general in use at the present time. This is one of the points of order that has been a little *perfected*.-J. N. L. If it does not, let those between whom the difficulty lies, immediately retire and confer together in order to an understanding. If this can not be arrived at, we know of no other way, but that the accused should remain outside, until the church is prepared to take action in his or her case. It having been ascertained who are prepared to enter into church fellowship, let their names be attached to the following:-*COOD 126.4*

**Church Covenant**

“We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together as a church, taking the name Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ.*COOD 127.1*

**Church Officers**

“The members being thus enrolled, they are prepared for the election of church officers. The following classes of rulers and officers of the Christian church are brought to view in the New Testament: apostles, evangelists, elders, bishops, pastors, and deacons. These we would divide into two great classes: those who hold their office by virtue of an especial call from God, and those selected by the Church: the former embracing apostles and evangelists; and the latter, elders, bishops, pastors, and deacons.*COOD 127.2*

**Apostles**

“Apostles is from the word *apostolos*, and signifies one sent forth, a messenger. It is used to designate in a pre-eminent sense the twelve apostles sent out by Christ; but it can not be confined to them nor to that age.*COOD 127.3*

“It can not be confined to the twelve. Christ was called an apostle. *Hebrews 3:1*. Paul and Barnabas were called apostles. *Acts 14:4, 14*. Titus and other brethren were called messenger [Greek, apostles]. *2 Corinthians 8:22, 23*. (The word of in *verse 23* is from the original *uper*, and signifies, *about, concerning*). Epaphroditus was called a messenger [Greek, apostle]. *Philippians 2:25*. Here we have at least four apostles besides the twelve, all living in the same age with them, which shows that the idea of perpetuating just twelve apostles in the church, as the Mormons and Irvingites hold, is unscriptural and absurd.*COOD 127.4*

**More Than Twelve Apostles**

“They can not be confined to the times covered by the New Testament record. First, the definition of the word apostle being, one sent out, it follows that any one especially sent out of God in any age to proclaim his truth, is, in that sense, an apostle. We think it more especially applies to those who are called of God to lead out in any new truth or reform; such, for instance, as Luther, Melancthon, and William Miller. Second, the Scriptures also show that apostles are to be perpetuated in the church. *Ephesians 4:1-13*. ‘And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; *till* we all come into the unity of the faith.’ This testimony shows that the office of apostles run coextensive with that of pastors and teachers, and other spiritual gifts, and is to last till the church, the body of Christ, all come into the unity of the faith.*COOD 128.1*

**Evangelists**

“Evangelists. This term if from the Greek word, *evangelists*, and is defined by Robinson: ‘Properly, a messenger of good tidings. In the New Testament, an evangelist. A preacher of the gospel, not fixed in any place, but traveling as a missionary to preach the gospel, and establish churches.’ See *Acts 21:8*; *Ephesians 4:11*; *2 Timothy 4:5*.*COOD 128.2*

“We come now to the second class, those appointed by the church, namely, elders, bishops, pastors, and deacons.*COOD 129.1*

**Elder and Bishop the Same**

"Elders. This office is also expressed by the words, bishop, pastor, and overseer. To show that these are interchangeable terms for the same thing we refer, first to *Titus 1:5, 7*: 'For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee; for *a bishop* must be blameless,' etc. The word elder in *verse 5*, is from *presbuteros*, and signifies, primarily, according to Robinson, 'an elder person, a senior; as an officer of the church it signifies the elders of Christian churches, presbyters, to whom was committed the direction and government of individual churches; properly the same as *episcopos*-which see.' The word rendered bishop in *verse 7* is from this word *episcopos*, and is defined by the same author as follows; 'In the New Testament, spoken of officers of the primitive churches an overseer, superintendent. This was originally simply the common Greek name of office equivalent to *presbuteros*, which latter was a Jewish term.' That elders and bishops are identical, is also shown from *Acts 20:17, 28*. The word elders in *verse 17* is from *presbuteros*, and word overseers in *verse 28* is from *episcopos* (bishop). The term pastor is from *poimen*, and signifies literally a herdsman, a shepherd, especially a pastor, a teacher, a spiritual guide of a particular church. The definition of this term shows that it signifies the same office as *presbuteros* (elder), and *episcopos* (bishop), a local office confined to a particular church.*COOD 129.2*

**Deacons and Their Duties**

"Deacons. This term is from the Greek *diakonos*, and is defined to signify primarily, 'a waiter, an attendant, a servant; usually derived from *dia* and *konos*, one dusty from running. An officer in the primitive church, one who had charge of the alms and money of the church, an overseer of the sick and poor, an almoner. *Philippians 1:1*; *1 Timothy 3:8, 12*; *Acts 6:1-6*; Also of a female who had charge of the female sick and poor." *Romans 16:1*.*COOD 129.3*

**Evangelists May Serve as Elder or Deacon**

"From what has been said, it will be seen that the officers of the church which are appointed solely by the church itself are reduced to two; namely, elders and deacons. From what then has arisen so much confusion upon the subject? It must be from the fact that the different names of elder, bishop, and pastor, are applied to the same office, and also from overlooking the principle that a person holding any one of the higher offices is qualified to officiate in any of the lower; and when performing the duties of such office is called by the title applying thereto. Thus Peter, though an apostle, calls himself an elder [*1 Peter 5:1*]; and Paul, carrying the liberalities of the brethren up to Jerusalem [*Acts 11:30*], might with equal propriety be called a deacon. In *2 Corinthians 8:4*, he is spoken of as performing the office of a deacon. The brethren prayed him to 'take upon himself the fellowship of the ministering [Greek, *diakonos*, deaconship], to the saints;' which he did. *Verse 19, 20*. Evangelists, also, are called elders. Paul says to Timothy, 'Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine.' *1 Timothy 5:17*. Here were some laboring in word and doctrine who are called elders; but such labor shows them to be evangelists, it being especially their work; hence evangelists are sometimes called elders; but only, of course, when acting in that capacity. *COOD 130.1*

**Relation of Church Officers**

“If this principle be correct, we may lay down the following general rule: that no person by virtue of a lower office can fill a higher one; but any one filling a higher office, can by virtue of that office, act in any of the lower. Thus a deacon can not by virtue of his deaconship, act as an elder, nor an elder as an evangelist, nor an evangelist as an apostle; but an apostle can act as evangelist, elder, or deacon; an evangelist, as an elder or deacon; and an elder as a deacon. We do not here speak of apostles and evangelists as officers of individual churches; for this is not the position they occupy, their calling making it necessary for them to move in a wider sphere; namely, to have, if apostles, the oversight of the churches. and if evangelists to labor to raise up churches in new fields. These, in our judgment, are the only officers qualified to organize churches.*COOD 130.2*

**Evangelists as Elders**

“We give it as the result of our examination of this subject that in the organization of a church, officers are to be supplied according to the necessities of the case. We understand the duties of a deacon to be confined exclusively to the temporal matters of the church; such, for instance, as taking charge of its finances, making preparation for the celebration of the ordinances, etc.; while it is the duty of the elder to take the lead and oversight of the church in spiritual things. This elder need not necessarily be a preacher, but may conduct the meetings of the church and administer the ordinance of baptism and the Lord’s supper in the absence of any higher officer. If an apostle or an evangelist should be present, all these duties would be left with him.*COOD 131.1*

“Where a church is so small that the duties of both an elder and a deacon can be conveniently performed by the same individual, we see no necessity of having more than one officer. Let this be an elder, who, as we have already shown, is qualified by virtue of his office to act also as a deacon. But if the church is so large that its temporal and spiritual wants can not be attended to by one person, let one or more deacons be chosen to look after its temporal affairs, while the elder or elders confine themselves to its spiritual interest.*COOD 131.2*

## Election of Officers

"When the names of the members are enrolled as specified in the former part of this article, let the minister read to them the scriptures setting forth the qualifications requisite to the offices of elder and deacon (these are described in *1 Timothy 3:1-10*; *Titus 1:6-9*), and then let the members select by informal ballot [1]This was soon changed, and the evangelist organizing the church selected a committee of council as to who of their number should be nominated for the various offices. These names being usually voted upon by yea or nay instead of ballot. In fact this plan was in use before the Testimony spoke of order "perfected"-J. N. L. such person or persons as they may wish to take these positions in their midst. Then let the minister ordain them, as in *Acts 6:6*; *Titus 1:5*. We need hardly suggest the necessity of every church keeping a record of all its proceedings. To this end a clerk will be necessary, who may be elected in the same manner. The elder of a church should act as chairman in all its business meetings.*COOD 132.1*

**Reception of Members**

“Let all candidates for admission to the church after its organization, be received by unanimous vote of the church, unless the opposition to their admission comes from those who are at the time subjects of labor or under the censure of the church.*COOD 132.2*

**Letters of Commendation**

"That the churches in different places may not be imposed upon by false brethren coming into their midst, to whom they are strangers, it seems necessary that brethren moving from place to place, should carry letters of commendation from the church with which they were last connected. As a form of such letter of commendation we suggest the following: 'This is to certify that ———— ———— is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church of ————, in good standing, and one whom we can recommend to the brethren where his (or her) lot may be cast.*COOD 132.3*

"'By order of the church at ————.*COOD 133.1*

"'————————, *Church Clerk*.*COOD 133.2*

"'Dated ————, ——.'*COOD 133.3*

"This step we regard as strictly in accordance with *Romans 16:1*; *2 Corinthians 3:1*. All of which is prayerfully submitted in behalf of the ministers of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists."*COOD 133.4*

Signed by nine members of the committee.*COOD 133.5*

## 25 NUMERICAL REPRESENTATION AND COMMITTEES

“FOR I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality.” *2 Corinthians 8:13, 14*.*COOD 134.1*

The thought here expressed by the apostle for raising means for the needy, and for the support of the gospel work, contains a grand principle on which the church should act; that is, the principle of equality. This equality is not an exact quantity from each individual, rich or poor; or exact numbers from each company, whether few or many; but in proportion to circumstances or number. In his Greek lexicon, Greenfield defines the Greek word *isotes*, rendered equality in this text, “equal proportion,” and he gives *2 Corinthians 8:13, 14*, as an illustration of this meaning. The same term occurring in *Colossians 4:1*, he renders “fairness, equity, what is equitable.”*COOD 134.2*

Seventh-day Adventists, when deciding upon the point of order relating to delegate representation in our general and State conferences, sought to follow this principle of “equality,” or proportionate representation, so that all doings should be with fairness to every company, whether great or small.*COOD 134.3*

## Churches Voted Into Conferences

In the month of September, 1862, the Michigan Conference held its first annual session in Monterey. Here, for the first time in our history, was presented the idea of churches being received by vote into conferences, as members are voted into churches. Seventeen churches in the State had already been organized, and these were by vote taken into the conference; and all members of those churches who were present were accepted, by vote, as delegates.*COOD 134.4*

**Auditing Laborers' Accounts**

At the same conference the plan was adopted of paying ministers a certain sum per week for services rendered. The ministers on their part were required to report the time spent in labor in the conference, with their receipts and expenses; and the conference receiving such report was to select an auditing committee who would make proper settlement for the year then closed.*COOD 135.1*

**Delegates' Credentials**

May 20, 1863, a general conference was held in Battle Creek, Mich. It was the first session of that body in which the delegates bore credentials from their respective States. The representation was not, however, on the ground of numerical basis. The States represented on this occasion were Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio.*COOD 135.2*

**Unequal Representation**

On looking over the delegation to this conference it was apparent to all that there was a lack in “equality” in accepting all as delegates that a church should be pleased to send, or for the State in which the General Conference was held to accept as delegates all the members present at the meeting. In this gathering Michigan had more members present than all the rest of the States combined, and the Battle Creek church, and two or three adjoining churches, had more members present than all the rest of the churches in the State of Michigan.*COOD 135.3*

**Conference Constitutions**

On May 21 a general conference constitution was adopted, and on the same day a State constitution was recommended to the State conferences, and adopted in a session of the Michigan Conference. These constitutions provided a numerical basis for delegate representation in the conferences and in the General Conference. There was not a dissenting voice to this plan for selecting delegates, and the sweet blessing of Cod, sensibly present, seemed to endorse the movement there made.*COOD 135.4*

Thus step by step the message advanced, and each step in system and order tended to strengthen and consolidate what had already been undertaken. With a continued increase of membership there was also a steady and continued growth in the finances. The report of the publishing association made May 16, of that year (1863), showed that in the two years of its existence the property at the office had increased from five thousand dollars to twenty thousand dollars, and that one fourth of this was actual earnings of the Review and Herald publishing work, as fifteen thousand dollars was all that had ever been furnished by our people either as stock or donations.*COOD 136.1*

**Selecting Conference Officers**

The plan first adopted in selecting conference officers was the same as was finally recommended in organizing churches. The organizer was to select a committee of two or three consecrated brethren of ability and good judgment, and they unitedly were to look over the membership list, meanwhile seeking wisdom from God as to who were best qualified to fill the offices of the church. These names were then nominated and brought before the church for consideration, the church-members either electing the persons nominated, or others, if in their judgment there were others better qualified. The same plan was pursued in selecting conference officers, save that the president named a committee of three to act aside from himself. As the work enlarged, and numbers increased the nominating committee usually consisted of five members instead of three.*COOD 136.2*

**Objection to Committees**

The first public objection to this plan known to writer, occurred Feb. 15 and 16, 1872, in Bloomfield, Cal., at the organization the California State conferences. There three professed Sabbath-keepers publicly raised objections to the chairman of the meeting-who had been chosen by the delegates present-appointing the committees on nomination, credentials, and resolutions. In a stormy manner, and with a bitter spirit, these men claimed that such naming of committees, and, in fact, the naming of men for office, should be left open for the whole church to name candidates, as was done in political meetings, so that all could have a chance to speak, and then ballot to see who would get the highest numbers of votes, etc.*COOD 136.3*

**“One Man Power”**

These men, in a turbulent manner pressed their views, hardly giving opportunity for either Elder or Mrs. White, who were both present, to say anything. In their remarks these men often used the expression they “did not believe in one man power.” Finally Elder White obtained the floor, and calmly said to the leading one of the three, “I see you do not believe in one man power unless you can be that one man.” Elder White and his wife openly condemned the course these men proposed in the matter of nominating and electing officers, and endorsed the plan our people were then pursuing.*COOD 137.1*

**Message to the Objectors**

We quote the following from a message sent to the leading man, to show how the Lord regarded the opposition of these men to the system of church order established among this people: “You will one day realize what you have lost by placing yourself in a defiant position, warring in spirit against the servants of God. Your bitterness of feeling toward Elder------—is astonishing. He has endured, and sacrificed, and toiled on this coast to do the work of God, but in your blindness, while unconsecrated in heart and life, you have ventured, in connection with-----and-----, to handle the servant of God in a cruel manner....*COOD 137.2*

“Satan has been using you as his agent to insinuate doubts, and to reiterate insinuations and misrepresentations which have originated in an unsanctified heart, which God would have cleansed from its pollution, but you refused to be instructed, refused correction, rejected reproof, and followed your own will and way.”-*Testimonies for the Church 4:229*.*COOD 138.1*

This testimony clearly endorsed the position of the Lord’s servants in the conference at Bloomfield, and as clearly condemns the course of those men who there set themselves in battle array against it.*COOD 138.2*

**Selecting Committees**

The point involved in this part of the “system” of order is, in having committees to nominate officers, etc. The mode of selecting such committees had varied from time to time. The plan which has seemed to give the best satisfaction both in the general and the State conferences has been for the whole conference committee to select a list of the various committees to be announced by the chairman.*COOD 138.3*

## A Ludicrous Position

In one or two instances where the “one man power” was feared (?) the conference had adopted the laborious plan of having all the delegates ballot for a committee who should select and announce the nominating committee. During the year 1900 the writer learned of one church which had been well equipped with good officers; but some of its members were pressing the sentiment of no nominating committee, choosing rather to “let the Lord guide without man’s judgment or reasoning in the matter.” To do this it would “not even do to ballot for officers.” They decided that the name of each and every member of the church must be written on separate cards. After the cards were all placed in a hat, while praying, one brother was to take from the hat the first card he touched, and the person whose name was written on it was to be the first officer in the church, and so on till all the officers were elected. The Lord left them to learn the folly of “leaving to him what he had left to them.” Why should the Lord give us the qualifications of officers if he was to choose them altogether, independent of our thought, judgment, or reason in the matter? This church wanted five officers, including those for the Sabbath-school and missionary society. Out of five drawings from the hat four times the name of a good little girl was drawn, who had not the ability for filling even one of the offices.*COOD 138.4*

That church learned a lesson, and decided that it was best to have the old plan carried out, and called for a minister to come and get them in order. This was done by having the officers selected in the usual way. The last report from that company was, “All harmonious and prospering now.”*COOD 139.1*

## 26 CAUTION TO THE CHURCH

“BUT I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” *2 Corinthians 11:3*.*COOD 140.1*

Greenfield, in his lexicon, says that the Greek word *aplotetos*, here rendered simplicity, means sincerity, and purity. It is used in *Romans 12:8* with reference to giving to aid the needy, and for the support of the cause. In *2 Corinthians 1:12* the same term applies to conversation, which word, *anasrophe*, is defined “mode of life, conduct, deportment.”*COOD 140.2*

**Perverting the Lord's Way**

The Lord marked out the "mode of life" for Adam and Eve, but Satan objected to it, and beguiled Eve with what he claimed was a better plan. In Paul's time Satan still sought slyly to introduce his ways in opposition to those given by the Saviour. He came out more boldly when using Elymas, the sorcerer, whom the apostle rebuked in these words: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" *Acts 13:10*.*COOD 140.3*

**Necessity of Order**

The scheming of Satan in olden time is just the same now. He is watching for his opportunity to pervert the Lord's work, and make confusion in the church. The Lord warned his people of this as early as 1853, in these words: "There is more real need of order than ever before; for, as God unites his children, Satan and his evil angels are very busy to prevent this unity and destroy it."-*"Supplement to Experience and Views," page 12*.*COOD 140.4*

In 1868 it was said: "Never, never, will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:649, 650*.*COOD 140.5*

**Form without Power**

I n *Christian Education, 50* (1894), we read: “Evil does not result because of organization, but because of making organization everything, and vital godliness of little moment.”*COOD 141.1*

This mode of Satan’s scheming was seen anciently. When the Lord had given the people sacrifices to keep fresh in their minds the offering of Christ that was to be made for them, Satan led them to “trust in the sacrifice and ordinances themselves, instead of resting upon him to whom they pointed.”*COOD 141.2*

We read again in *Christian Education, 134, 136*, that “when form and machinery take the pre-eminence, and a laborious task is made of carrying on the work that should be done with simplicity, evil will result, and little will be accomplished in proportion to the effort put forth. The object of organization is just the reverse of all this; and should we disorganize, it would be like tearing down that which we have built up. Evil results have been seen, both in the Sabbath-school work and in the missionary society, because of making much of machinery, while vital experience was lost sight of.”*COOD 141.3*

**God Led to Order**

Not a line is found in the Testimonies objecting to the *plan* and *system* of *order* and *organization* that has been established among Seventh-day Adventists; but we have found it plainly stated that "God has led" in the establishment of the *system*. In 1894 it was spoken of as "a *plan* that has been *perfected*," and the statement made that is is to "*stand, strengthened* and *established*."*COOD 141.4*

**Testimonies Misunderstood**

In view of these plain statements, we inquire what has led individuals to the conclusion that the present mode of working, so well established, was now to be relaxed? We answer. It must be a misunderstanding of the cautions given to this people. The following was given in 1881, in *Testimonies for the Church 4:535*: "The steady progress of our work, and our increased facilities, are filling the hearts and minds of many of our people with satisfaction and pride, which we fear will take the place of the love of God in the soul. Busy activity in the mechanical part of even the work of God may so occupy the mind that prayer shall be neglected, and self-importance and self-sufficiency, so ready to urge their way, shall take the place of true goodness, meekness, and lowliness of heart. The zealous cry may be heard, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these!' 'Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord.' But where are the burden-bearers? Where are the fathers and mothers in Israel? Where are those who carry upon the heart the burden for souls, and who come in close sympathy with their fellow men, ready to place themselves in any position to save them from eternal ruin?"*COOD 141.5*

**Not to Boast of Institutions**

Not long after this caution was given, one who has since left our ranks, in giving instruction to young ministers, told them they should get before the people an idea of our great institutions and magnitude of our work, as a means of creating an interest in their minds. May the good Lord forgive us who may have followed in that line.*COOD 142.1*

**Stereotyped Plans to be Avoided**

In the same volume of the Testimonies we read of another danger: “Our brethren should be guarded lest they become stereotyped in their plans and labors. They may spend time and money in preparing an exact channel, that the work must be done in just such a way or it is not done right. There is danger of being too particular.”*COOD 142.2*

**Too Much Machinery**

"There is a great work to be done in the day of God's preparation, in devising and executing plans for the advancement of his cause. Our publications should have a wide circulation; for they are doing a great work. There is much missionary work to be done. But I have been shown that there is danger of having this work too mechanical, so intricate and complicated that less will be accomplished than if it wee more simple, direct, plain, and decided. We have neither time nor means to keep all parts of this machinery in harmonious action....*COOD 143.1*

"By obtaining a most thorough education in all the minutia, and leaving vital principles out of the question we become dry and formal workers. The hearts that God has made willing by the operations of his grace, are fitted for the work.... Less dwelling upon set forms, less of the mechanical, and more of the power of godliness, are essential in this solemn, fearful day of responsibilities."-*Testimonies for the Church 4:600, 601*.*COOD 143.2*

In the *Review* of Aug. 7, 1894, we read: "The people of God have lost much by not maintaining the *simplicity* of the truth as it is in Jesus. This simplicity has been crowded out, and form and ceremonies, and a round of busy activities in mechanical work have taken its place. Pride and lukewarmness have made the professed people of God and offense in is sight."*COOD 143.3*

**Missionary Rules, Reporting, etc**

Some of the foregoing statements refer especially to *rules* adopted in the tract and missionary societies, which had made the work of the society "a laborious task." Especially was this the case with the devoted, earnest souls, who did effective work, but had not the ability to make the required reports, or perchance had obtained their tracts without following all the round specified in the *rules* of the society. The writer in those days saw persons plead with tears for tracts for some soul who was anxious to read, but the careful librarian, determined to follow the *rules*, refused them because they failed to keep an exact account of the number of pages they gave away, and did not *report* as specified in the mechanical rules.*COOD 143.4*

In an unpublished Testimony of 1894, attention is again called to these things, but to avoid the difficulty the missionary society was not to be abolished, neither was order to be abandoned, as may be seen by what follows: "I learn that it is proposed by some of our brethren to do away with the organization of some, at least, of the branches of our work. No doubt what has led them to propose this step is that in some of our organizations the machinery has been made so complicated as really to hinder the work. This, however, is not an argument against organization, but against the perversion of it."*COOD 144.1*

## 27 TIMELY ADVICE TO THE CHURCH

“CURSED be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like unto the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” *Jeremiah 17:5-8*.*COOD 145.1*

**Talents God's Property**

In a Testimony dated Sept. 19, 1895, the following remarks are found, based on the foregoing scriptures: "Let no plans or methods be brought into any of our institutions that will place mind or talent under the control of human judgment, for this is not in God's order. God has given to man talents or influence which belong to him alone and no greater dishonor can be done to God than for one finite agent to purchase from men their God-given talent, or the product of such talent, to be absolutely under his control, even though the benefits of the same be used to the advantage of the cause. In such arrangements, one man's mind is ruled by another man's mind, and the human agent is separated from God, and exposed to temptations. Satan's methods tend to one end,-to make men the slaves of men. And when this is done, confusion and distrust, jealousies and evil surmisings are the result. Such a course destroys man's faith in God, and in the principles which are to control his work, to purge from guilt and from every species of selfishness and hypocrisy."*COOD 145.2*

**Perversion of Organization**

What was contemplated in the *plan* of organization adopted by Seventh-day Adventists was that those placed in responsible positions should act as counselors to the flock, being in themselves, in all things, and example of the instructions they gave. Thus by mutual counsel, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the work would move on harmoniously. We subjoin a few quotations illustrating the statement that it is "perversion of organization," and not organization itself, that is responsible for the state of things which the Lord condemns.*COOD 146.1*

In the *Review* of Feb. 28, 1893, is the following: "Those who have the oversight of the churches should select members who have ability, and place them under responsibilities, at the same time giving them instruction as to how they may best serve and bless others.*COOD 146.2*

"Let those who are just gaining an experience be invited to meet with more experienced workers, and as did the disciples after their first missionary effort, let them tell what they have done, and what have been their failures or success. In this way opportunity will be given to reprove or encourage, as the case may demand, and teach them how to work in the best manner.*COOD 146.3*

"If in accepting responsibility, in seeking to impart light to others, they tremble under the cross, they will be led to the Saviour to find strength and grace and power. Through this experience they will learn to rely, not on their ministers, but on the Lord himself."*COOD 146.4*

**Overseers Counsel Together**

This thought is again brought out in the *Review* of March 6, 1893: “Well organized work must be done in the church, that its members may understand the manner in which they may impart light to others, and thus strengthen their own faith and increase their knowledge.... Why do not overseers of the church have councils to devise ways whereby young men and women may be trained to put to use their intrusted talents?”*COOD 146.5*

**Seek God's Guidance**

While these instructions pointed out the course that should be taken, Satan was busy in "perverting" the work, as stated in the *Review* of Aug. 7, 1894: "The people of God have educated themselves in such a way that they have come to look to those in positions of trust as guardians of truth, and have placed men where God should be. When perplexities have come upon them, instead of seeking God, they have gone to human sources for help, and have received only such help as man can give.... It is a mistake to make men believe that the workers for Christ should make no move save that which has first been brought before some responsible men. Men must not be educated to look to men as to God. While it is necessary that be a counseling together and a unity of action among the laborers, one man's mind and one man's judgment must not be the controlling power.*COOD 147.1*

"Every true follower of Christ has some work to do for him, for which he is responsible to his own master, and that work he is expected to do with fidelity, waiting for command and direction from his leaders.... The president of the conference is not do do the thinking for all the people. He has not an immortal brain, but has capabilities and powers like any other man. And to every man God has given his work."*COOD 147.2*

**Seek the Lord**

In the *Review* of Aug. 14, 1894, the same topic is continued in these words; “The education that should be given to all is, that they should exercise faith, that they should go to God in earnest prayer, and learn to think for themselves. To meet difficulties and plow through them by the help of God is a lesson of the highest value. If men and women do this, they realize that their help has not come from a human source, but from the living God, and that having sought wisdom of God, they have not sought in vain. It is the privilege of every soul to go to God for himself, and to have a personal connection with the source of all power. Then the lips can speak forth the praises, not of men, but of God.”*COOD 147.3*

**Mode of Procedure in Early Days**

This instruction is in harmony with the “plan” adopted in the early times of our organized conferences. In the public meetings the requests for labor, and the “openings” for the same, were presented freely and fully, after which each and all the ministers were requested to seek God to learn for themselves where the Lord would have them labor, In a later session, experiences were related of how the Lord was leading and impressing their minds, so that when the respective fields of labor was finally assigned to the ministers it was evident to all, even to the entire assembly, that the Lord was guiding. The after results showed that the Lord had a work prepared for these laborers in the field to which he led them. It was after seeking the Lord for ten days in 1868, that the decision was made to send the first laborers to California.*COOD 148.1*

**Encourage Workers**

The benefit to accrue from a personal seeking of the Lord in reference to duty is again shown in the *Review* of July 16, 1895: "We need to leave more room for the working of the Holy Spirit, in order that laborers may be bound together and may move forward in the strength of a united body of soldiers. Let all remember that we are 'a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.' Therefore each one should inquire with meekness and fear, What is my path of duty? ...*COOD 148.2*

"The work of God is retarded by criminal unbelief in his power to use the common people to carry forward his work successfully.... Every individual is to become an instrument in his hands to work for the salvation of souls. Not one who desires to labor for the Master is to be refused a place, if he is a true follower of Christ. Every one has his responsibilities to bear in the cause of Christ. The efficiency of the Spirit of God will make effective the labors of all who are willing to submit to his guidance."*COOD 148.3*

## A Hard, Critical Spirit Condemned

Special Testimony," No. 3, Aug. 3, 1894, contains the following: "A hard, unjust, critical spirit has been indulged among those who have held positions of trust in the work of the Lord. Unless those who have indulged this spirit are converted, they will be relieved of the responsibilities of acting a part in committees of council even in the transaction of business. Unless they are converted, their voice must not be heard in the council; for the aggregate result is more injurious than beneficial."-*Pages 10, 11*.*COOD 149.1*

**Reject Not God's Sanction**

"The Lord must be believed and served as the great 'I AM.' And we must trust implicitly in him. Let not men prescribe laws to take the place of God's law. Never educate men to trust in men; for man's wisdom is not sufficient to decide as to their right to engage in the Lord's work. When God lays a work upon individuals, men are not to reject his sanction. God must not be impeded in the working out of his plans by men's interference, but this has been done again and again.... If men men will not meddle with God's plan, and will let him work upon minds and character, building them up according to his plan, a work will be accomplished that will stand through the severest trial." _ *Ibid, page 40*.*COOD 149.2*

**No Lording Over God's Heritage**

In a Testimony dated May 26, 1896, we read: "Organizations, institutions, unless kept by the power of God, will work under Satan's direction to bring men under the control of men; and fraud and guile will bear the semblance of zeal for truth, and for the advancement of the kingdom of God. Whatever in our practise is not as open as the day, belongs to the methods of the prince of evil.*COOD 149.3*

"The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. But if a man is sanguine of his own powers, and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his evil the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he loose his own soul, and imperil the souls of others.*COOD 150.1*

"This lording it over God's heritage will create such a disgust of man's jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high positions of authority can not be trusted to mold and fashion other men's minds and characters. The result will be a loss of confidence even in the management of faithful men. But the Lord will raise up laborers who realize their own nothingness apart from him."*COOD 150.2*

From these quotations it is clearly seen that it is not the *system* of organization that is at fault, but the "perversion of it."*COOD 150.3*

## 28 ADVICE TO THE CHURCH-CONTINUED

“THOU sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” *Revelation 3:17-19*.*COOD 151.1*

**Why Reproofs Are Needed**

The following remarks upon this scripture are found in *Testimonies for the Church 3:254*: “Many inquire, Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the Testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and with grievous sins? We love the truth; we are prospering; we are in no need of these Testimonies of warning and reproof. But let these murmurers see their hearts, and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible. Let them humble their souls before God, let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is the spotless character made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer; and eye-salve, which is the grace of God, and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things, and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.”*COOD 151.2*

**Laodicean Message**

When considering the magnitude of existing evils, we may realize the need of continued reproofs and the importance of the counsel of the "true witness" in the "Laodicean" message, hence we quote the following, given Nov. 3, 1890: "Let none of the workers exalt themselves, and seek to carry through their ideas without the sanction and co-operation of the people of God. They will not succeed, for God will not permit it. The foundations of the institutions among us were laid in sacrifice. They belong to the people, and all who have denied self, and made sacrifices great or small according to their ability, to bring these instrumentalities into existence, should feel that they have a special interest in them. They should not loose their interest, or become despondent in regard to the success of the work. As the perils of the last days thicken about us, they should pray more earnestly that work may prosper. Those who have lifted burdens when the work went hard should have a part in important councils; for they acted a part when counseling together was considered a far more solemn and sacred matter than it is now. No confederacy should be formed with unbelievers, neither should you call together a certain chosen number who think as you do, and who will say amen to all that you propose, while others are excluded, who you think will not be in harmony. I was shown that there was great danger of doing this.*COOD 151.3*

**Counsel of Unbelievers Not to Be Followed**

"We are not to hear the counsel or follow the plans suggested by unbelievers. Suggestions made by those who know not the work that God is doing for this time will be such as to weaken the power of the instrumentalities of God. By accepting such suggestions, the counsel of Christ is set at naught."*COOD 152.1*

We find in the *Review* of Nov. 14, 1893, the following instruction relative to committee meetings, which, had it been faithfully followed, would have saved many false moves that have been made: "Have it understood that those who come to the committee meetings come with the thought that they are to meet with God, who has given them their work; that it is a sin to waste moments in unimportant conversation; for they are doing the Lord's business, and must do the work in the most businesslike, perfect way. Let all understand that there is to be no trifling. Every one should come to the meetings in a consecrated, devotional frame of mind, because important matters are to be considered in relation to the cause of God. This work is to be done after his own order, and if men have been elected to the grave responsibility of having a voice, and exerting an influence in the accomplishment of this great work, let their actions in every particular show that they recognize their responsibility and accountability to understand the will of the Lord as far as possible."*COOD 152.2*

## Effects of Following Worldly Policy

In “Special Testimony,” No. I, page 35, published in 1892, we are warned in these words of a danger liable to arise: “Formality, worldly wisdom, worldly caution, worldly policy, will appear to many to be the very power of God, but when accepted, it stands as an obstacle to prevent God’s light, in warnings, reproof, and counsel from coming to the world.”*COOD 153.1*

Some of the results of following “worldly policy,” showing how it keeps the light from the world, is seen in an article in the *Review* of July 9, 1895: “There are a few who devise, plan and work; but the great mass of the people do not lift their hands to do anything for fear of being repulsed, for fear that others will regard them as out of their place. Many have willing hands and hearts, but they are discouraged from putting their energies into the work. They are criticized if they try to do anything, and finally allow their talents to lie dormant for fear of criticism, when if they were encouraged to use them, the work would be advanced, and workers would be added to the force of missionaries.... A few are selected to hold responsible positions, and the work is divided up among these brethren. Many more who ought to have an opportunity to develop into efficient workers for the Lord, are left in the shadow.”*COOD 153.2*

## Partiality Condemned

In a later number of the *Review*, the issue of July 23, 1895, there appeared still further light on the question under consideration: “Laws and rules are being made at the centers of the work that will soon be broken into atoms. Men are not to dictate. It is not for those in places of authority to employ all their powers to sustain some, while others are cast down, ignored, forsaken, and left to perish. But it is the duty of the leaders to lend a helping hand to all who are in need. Let each work in the line God may indicate to him by his Holy Spirit.... None are to exercise their human authority to bind the minds and souls of their fellow men. They are not to devise and put into practise methods and plans to bring every individual under their jurisdiction.*COOD 154.1*

**Not to Work the Spirit**

“Those who know the truth are to be worked by the Holy Spirit, and not themselves try to work the Spirit. If the cords are drawn much tighter, if the rules are made much finer, if men continue to bind their fellow laborers closer and closer to the commandments of men, many will be stirred by the Spirit of God to break every shackle, and assert their liberty in Christ Jesus.*COOD 154.2*

**Respect God's Plan**

"Let man now cease to trust in man. While they should respect God's *plan* for unity of action [this *plan* relates to *system* of *order* and *organization* which the Testimony said God had led in establishing, and which is to *stand*, strengthened and established.-J. N. L.] Let all remember that the Holy Spirit is molding and fashioning the human agent in the divine similitude. The life that is hid with Christ in God is revealed through me.... The eye should not be so constantly looking to men, studying the plans which men devise; but rather seeking for a knowledge of the plans which are determined by the Source of all wisdom. Then there will be no danger of having plans for the work contaminated by flowing through impure human channels. Look to God; pray to God; wait and watch and pray to God; work for God.... The weak must not now trust in finite men if they would be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord."*COOD 154.3*

**Combining Institutions**

The year in which this Testimony was given, some members of the General Conference Committee were studying a scheme by which to bring all the institutions connected with this cause under the controlling head of the General Conference. These various institutions were to be represented as departments with a general head or manager, something on the plan of the *Cabinet* of the United States. In a special Testimony to the Battle Creek church, August, 1896, page 21, this plan is referred to in these words: “The scheme for consolidation is detrimental to the cause of present truth. Battle Creek has all the power she should have. Some in that place have advanced selfish plans, and if any branch of the work promises a measure of success, they have not exercised the spirit which lets well enough alone, but have made an effort to attach these interests to the great whole. They have striven to embrace altogether too much, and yet they are eager to get more. When they can show that they have made these plans under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then confidence in them may be restored.”*COOD 155.1*

**When Satanic Controversy Will End**

A cheering conditional prediction was given in a Testimony of November, 1890, which we long to see fulfilled: “When we are united in the unity for which Christ prayed, this long controversy that has been kept up through Satanic agency will end, and we shall not see men framing plans after the order of the world because they have not spiritual eyesight to discern spiritual things.*COOD 155.2*

**Associations Not Ignored**

Because of wrong management or unwise movements in the missionary society and the Sabbath-school work, pointed out in the Testimonies, it is unnecessary to ignore these associations, as some have seemed to do, for “it has been proved in the missionary field that, whatever may be the preaching talent, if the laboring part is neglected, if the people are not taught how to work, how to conduct meetings, how to act their part in missionary labor, how to reach the people successfully, the work will be nearly a failure There is much to be done in the Sabbath-school work also, in bringing the people to realize their obligation to act their part. God calls them to work for him, and the minister should guide their efforts.”-*“Testimonies for the Church,” No. 32, page 12.COOD 156.1*

“Instruction relative to Sabbath-school work, also should be largely given in the several churches. The labor will thus be more effective, and the improvement more permanent.”-*Gospel Workers (1892), 223.COOD 156.2*

**Simple Methods of Work**

The following referring to church work is found in the *Review* of Feb. 28, 1893: “The very simplest methods of work should be devised, and set in operation among the churches. If the members will co-operate with such a plan, and perseveringly carry it out, they will reap a rich reward; for their experience will grow brighter, their ability will increase, through exercise, and souls will be saved through their efforts.”*COOD 156.3*

## 29 REORGANIZATION

“MEN that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” *1 Chronicles 12:32*.*COOD 157.1*

In the reorganization of our conference work throughout the world, the statement of the above text was true respecting the men accomplishing the work, for the Lord gave instruction by “Special Testimonies” as to what was needed to remedy existing difficulties.*COOD 157.2*

**Standing in 1868**

Up to 1868 our field of operations included that portion of the United States east of the Missouri River and north of the parallel of latitude corresponding with the southern line of Missouri. At that time the General Conference Committee had only three members, the president of the Conference being one of the members. The eight local conferences were all under the supervision of the General Conference, which had its headquarters at Battle Creek, Mich.*COOD 157.3*

**Why Reorganization Was Necessary**

As the message extended to other parts and to distant lands, a necessity arose for a reorganization of the entire field. Hence, steps were taken in 1897 pointing in that direction. But the work was hindered to some extent by a perversion of the instruction given through the Testimonies. Because it was said that “many things could be better decided on the ground in distant fields than to refer everything to Battle Creek,-to the president of the General Conference,” that “the field was so large that no one man could act as president of the General Conference with the idea that he must decide the local matters in distant fields,” and that “those in the fields should seek the Lord for guidance,” that “the field and work should be divided,” some seemed to think that now it was to be every man for himself, and no General Conference president, and no committees of council to have a voice in the work.*COOD 157.4*

At last a more definite idea of what was meant by the reorganization prevailed; that it meant a carrying out of the same principles of order which the Lord had directed in a smaller field, but dividing the burden among many counselors, and in the different fields. First, the fields were districted, with a superintendent to each field, members of the General Conference Committee acting in counsel with the State or mission officers in their respective field. Later, union conferences began to be organized.*COOD 158.1*

The work of reorganizing has been more thoroughly accomplished during the last six years, in which time the European General Conference has been reorganized, with an executive committee of fourteen members; and the original General Conference, with its headquarters at Washington, D.C., has an executive committee of thirty-two members, representing all the various interests of the message, and taking the place of some of the general organizations, which have been discontinued.*COOD 158.2*

**Organized Standing in 1904**

The following, from the General Conference Year-Book of 1904 gives some interesting statistical facts up to Jan. 1, 1903:-*COOD 158.3*

“At that time our organized work consisted of two general conferences, composed of fourteen union conferences, seventy-two local conferences, and forty-two missions. These are distributed as follows: Local conferences in North America, forty-nine; outside of North America, twenty-three. Union conferences in America, eight; in other countries, six. Mission fields in America, including Alaska, and Hawaii, and Newfoundland, five; missions outside of America, thirty-seven. located as follows: Twelve in Europe, four in Africa, three in Asia, two in South America, two in South Africa, and the remainder in Central America, Mexico, West Indies, and the Pacific Islands. Connected with these missions are sixty-seven ordained and licensed ministers, and one hundred and thirty-one churches.”*COOD 158.4*

From the Year-Book of 1906 we learn that eighteen new missions were opened in different parts of the world by this people during the year 1905, and that sixty missionaries were sent to the different mission fields.*COOD 159.1*

**Unity in Diversity**

It is a source of encouragement to know that these different organizations in various countries and nationalities are all united in the promulgation of the one great cause of truth, and the salvation of men. Not in the mere formal machinery of organization do we trust, but in God, the author of order and organization. With his blessing upon the united and harmonious action of his workers we may realize how good and pleasant it is for for brethren to be united, to dwell together in unity, and to have" all things done decently and in order."*COOD 159.2*

**Objects of Christ's Supreme Regard**

Perhaps we can not better close this chapter than by quoting the following from a Testimony in the *Review* of Sept. 5, 1893: "Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows his supreme regard."*COOD 159.3*

In these few pages we have traced much of the Bible instruction concerning the church of God, the relation of its members to the head-Christ-and how the members should conduct themselves. Many excellent things have also been presented from the "Testimonies for the Church" respecting the same. It has also been shown how, under the Lord's guidance, Bible order has been established among Seventh-day Adventists. Under this *system* and *plan* the message of the third angel (*Revelation 14:9-12*) is rapidly spreading to the ends of the earth. It has also been shown how in *reorganization*, the *system* has been adapted to the enlarged field of labor, and how the purpose of the enemy to disorganize the work has been defeated. Our hope and expectation is that this organization thus "*perfected* and *strengthened*" will be a means under God's hand of leading the church fully out of "the wilderness," "clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."*COOD 159.4*

## 30 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

"LET all things be done decently and in order." *1 Corinthians 14:40*.*COOD 161.1*

Many questions from time to time have been propounded on church discipline, and as the answers may be of interest as well as helpful to other inquirers, we herewith present them.*COOD 161.2*

Question.-At the time of the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination was the *tithe* considered a principle of those entering into organization, and endorsed by them?*COOD 161.3*

Answer.-The matter of *tithes* for the support of ministry was decided by a Bible class conducted by Elder J. N. Andrews, in Battle Creek, Mich., in April, 1858, as will be seen on page 110 of this pamphlet. It was called at first "systematic benevolence on the tithing principle;" but the Testimonies respecting it called it *tithes* from the first. When the matter of church organization was entered into in 1862 and 1863, this plan of raising means for the support of the gospel ministry was generally accepted among the churches, and was adopted in conference organization as the principal source of support for the ministry.*COOD 161.4*

Q.-Do you make tea and coffee a test when you organize a church? and is it considered a violation of true Christian fellowship to continue their use?*COOD 161.5*

A.-Before organizing a church, instruction is given to the candidates for membership, showing the physiological harm in the use of these articles, and that it is sin to indulge in the use of that which will injure us physically, and that to be a true commandment-keeper we can not sanction the use of anything that will tend to shorten our own lives, but I do not know of any one ever being expelled for using those articles.*COOD 161.6*

Q.-Is the question of health reform made a test of fellowship?*COOD 162.1*

A.-Those accepting the message should be instructed in the

importance of true Christian temperance. In *1 Corinthians 10:31* the apostle says: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” When admonishing us to “so run, that ye may obtain,” he says, “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” *1 Corinthians 9:24, 25*. True temperance, let it be understood, is abstinence from all injurious articles, and a moderate use of that which is good.*COOD 162.2*

Q.-Do you require a person to believe the Testimonies before baptizing him and receiving him into church fellowship?*COOD 162.3*

A.-Instruction should be given with reference to the gift of prophecy, and its manifestation among Seventh-day Adventists, and the candidate should have opportunity to read enough of Sister White’s writings to learn the practical bearing and nature of her work among this people. There have been cases in the past where persons were baptized before they had even heard that there was such a gift among this denomination. Such a course is decidedly wrong. In some instances there was afterward “war in the camp,” as those individuals claimed they had been deceived by being brought into fellowship before they knew that the spirit of prophecy was among this people. Just how we should deal with different cases in reference to belief or unbelief in the Testimonies is plainly stated by Sister White herself, in *Gospel Workers (1892), 279, 280*.*COOD 162.4*

On page 247 of the same book is presented how withholding the Testimonies from the people leave them without that which would “carry them forward to an experimental knowledge of vital godliness.”*COOD 162.5*

Q.-Is the use of tobacco ever excusable when an individual believes his health to be at stake when he ceases to use it?*COOD 163.1*

A.-The use of tobacco, in any form, is an injury to the health, as attested by the most eminent physicians. So the health plea for the continuance of its use is only a delusive snare of the enemy, and is not to be entertained.*COOD 163.2*

Q.-To what extent do you make the dress question a test?*COOD*

*163.3*

A.-We endeavor to instruct the believers from the testimony of Paul and apostle Peter, in the matter of plainness of dress, and the discarding of the wearing of gold and silver and other useless articles simply as ornaments. See *1 Peter 3:1-5*; *1 Timothy 2:9, 10*.*COOD 163.4*

Q.-Are tithe paying, pork eating, and tobacco using made a test of fellowship?*COOD 163.5*

A.-Refraining from the use of pork is urged upon the people from a physiological standpoint, and is a question that should be settled before coming into the church. The use of tobacco and all narcotics is made a test. As to the paying of tithes, we have tried to follow the instruction which was given to the churches in Ohio, in the sixties. Some in Ohio began to argue the matter of assessing each member for his tithes, and then collecting the same. The instruction given at time is found in *Testimonies for the Church 1:237*. The principles concerning the system of tithe paying was to be presented to the people, and they to be left free to carry out their convictions without compulsion. The Lord does not require nor desire forced gifts to sustain his cause. See also Vol. IV, page 396, second paragraph.*COOD 163.6*

Q.-How many ways are there of receiving members into the church?*COOD 163.7*

A.-On the page of the church record book devoted to the list of names you will note *three* ways of receiving members: By vote, by baptism, and by letter. By vote, is meant action taken to accept a member who has been baptized before applying for membership. In such case the date of taking such vote should be entered in the column headed “by vote,” and the record of the action taken will be entered in the report of the meeting when such transaction occurred.*COOD 163.8*

In case a vote is taken to accept a person as a candidate for baptism and membership when baptized, while it appears in the record of the meeting where such action was taken, it is not entered in the column headed “by vote.” But when such person is baptized,

his baptism unites him to the church, and the date of his baptism unites him to the church, and the date of baptism is placed opposite his name in the column headed “by baptism;” and in the record it should be inserted when, where, and by whom such person was baptized.*COOD 164.1*

When a person is received by letter form another church, the date to be placed in the column thus designated is that of the vote taken to receive the person. The record of the action is also placed in the record of the meeting when said action was taken.*COOD 164.2*

Q.-Can one be a church-member who has two living wives or husbands?*COOD 164.3*

A.-A person might get into that unpleasant situation before accepting the truth, or before making any profession of religion, and, upon sincere repentance, be forgiven that sin as well as other sins. Again, a woman may have been left by her husband, who preferred some other woman, or the husband may have been deserted by his wife, who preferred some other man. In such instances the position has been taken that, according to *Matthew 19:9*, the one thus deserted is free to marry again. In case of one having two living wives, a Testimony was given in the fifties that they should take a humble position in the church under a consciousness of their sin.*COOD 164.4*

Q.-Is marrying out of the truth made a test of fellowship?*COOD 165.1*

A.-I do not know of any case where it has been so made a test; but on the authority of the apostle Paul, and “Testimonies for the Church,” a marriage union is better to be “only in the Lord.”*COOD 165.2*

Q.-If there is a dissenting voice to the reception of a member into the church, should he or she be considered as received? In other words, should the “majority” rule in this matter, should the vote be unanimous?*COOD 165.3*

A.-For a reply to this question see page 135 of this pamphlet, in the conference address on organization.*COOD 165.4*

Q.-Is it necessary to have a two-thirds or three-fourths vote to elect deacons, or to transact business for the church?*COOD 165.5*

A.-In transacting the legal business of the church the law calls for "a majority vote of the regular worshipers." Sometimes a church may have enrolled members who can not be present at the election. And, in fact, are so far away that they can not be counted as "regular worshipers." In making the count before voting, we usually count out non-resident members, and look for a majority of the stated worshipers to transact the business. This applies especially to legally organized church societies. In companies unorganized legally, a majority vote of those assembled on a duly advertised call decides the business under consideration.*COOD 165.6*

Q.-Would you advise a church to adopt purely parliamentary rules for the transaction of all their business?*COOD 165.7*

A.-While a church should transact its business in a businesslike manner, they would probably make greater progress in seeking the Lord for his guidance than of being too strenuous to do all things just as they do in parliament. The presence of one angel in our church councils would expedite church matters more rapidly than an armful of parliamentary rules.*COOD 165.8*

Q.-In whom, or in what body, is the discipline for a church vested? Can one church make tests as they choose on tobacco using, liquor drinking, profanity, etc., and still be in harmony with the conference, or the body of Adventists?*COOD 166.1*

A.-It has never been recognized by the Seventh-day Adventists that it was the province of an individual church to make tests of fellowship, independent of the conference, and the body of Seventh-day Adventists. The following Testimony, already printed in a previous chapter, has a direct bearing on this question: "God is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead."-*Testimonies for the Church 1:207*.*COOD 166.2*

Q.-In how many ways are members removed from the church?*COOD 166.3*

A.-Three: By letter, by apostasy, and by death. When a letter is voted, the record of that vote is made in the register, but not in the column opposite the name. No date is placed in that column until a report is received from the church with which they have united. Then there is entered in that column the date when the vote was taken by the other church to receive them. In case of apostasy and a vote to withdraw from a member, the "apostasy" column should contain the date of the vote of expulsion, and the record of the meeting give the particulars respecting the charge against such person, and the vote. In case of death, the date of the death should be placed in the column assigned for such record. In the register of the doings of the church should be some particulars respecting the cause of death, and also who officiated at the funeral, etc.,*COOD 166.4*

In some churches there has been adopted a plan of erasing the names from the list of individuals who fail to report. A better plan is reported in the *Review* of April 26, 1906, which reads: "It was voted that all members whose address could not be learned would be placed upon what should be known as the retired list, and not be counted with the other membership of the church. This is done with the understanding that as soon as any of these members are heard from their names shall be added to the regular list of members, provided they have remained faithful in the truth." This is apparently in line with the instruction, "Thou art thy brother's keeper."*COOD 167.1*

Q.-Is it deemed proper for Seventh-day Adventists to unite with secret societies?*COOD 167.2*

A.-While Seventh-day Adventists have not regarded it as a part of their work to engage in a warfare on secret societies, we have ever sought to discourage our people from uniting with them, on the ground of the Lord's charge,"Say ye not, A confederacy ["Confederacy, a compact of mutual support or common action."-*Webster*], to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the

Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." *Isaiah 8:12, 13*.*COOD 167.3*

Our people have been taught from the beginning that the third angel's message is worthy of all our best energies. In "Testimonies for the Church." No. 34, page 17, we read: "We are to enter into no confederacy with the world, supposing that by so doing we could accomplish more."*COOD 167.4*

In *Testimonies for the Church 7:84*, we read: "We are now to use all our entrusted capabilities in giving the last warning message to the world. In this work we are to preserve our individuality. We are not to unite with secret societies or with trade unions."*COOD 167.5*

In Volume VIII, page 28, we read: "A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama,-Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies."*COOD 168.1*

Q.-Upon what ground were unbelievers in the Testimonies disfellowshipped?*COOD 168.2*

A.-This question has reference to those who make war on those who believe the Testimonies. The instruction in these cases is given in the writings themselves. See *Testimonies for the Church 1:228, 229, 382*. On pages 250, and 251 of the same volume is reference to a case which, if the laborer had patiently waited for a few weeks, the man spoken of was violating the Sabbath, and might have been excluded from the church for that offense.*COOD 168.3*

Q.-Would it be according to the word of God, and right for a church to elect three deacons, and give them, by vote of the church, authority to investigate and decide any case of an erring brother, and if they found him guilty of sin, for them to disfellowship him from the church without any other vote of the church?*COOD 168.4*

A.-No; for two reasons. First, the duties of a deacon relate to the temporal interests of the church. The dealing with members is the work of the elders or evangelists, who are the shepherds of the flock. Second, the mode of dealing proposed is not in accordance

with our Saviour's instruction given in *Matthew 18:15-20*. We read of this instruction given by Christ where "he states the rule to be applied in cases of trial with its members. After he has given explicit directions as to the course to be pursued, he says 'Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever [in church discipline] ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' Thus even the heavenly authority ratifies the discipline of the church in regard to its members, when the Bible rule has been followed."-*Testimonies for the Church 3:428*. See also *Vol. VII, pages 262-264*.*COOD 168.5*

Q.-Is it right to vote out a member at any ordinary business meeting, by a majority present, ought the vote to be unanimous?*COOD 169.1*

A.-In a meeting properly notified when action is to taken on a case, according to the usage of the church, the vote to exclude should be unanimous, unless the opposition come from those who are themselves subjects of labor, or under the censure of the church.*COOD 169.2*

Q.-What is the custom of our people in reference to insuring churches and other property? Do our publishing houses insure when they do not have to borrow money on the property? and has any Testimony been given against insuring church property?*COOD 169.3*

A.-It is the general custom of this people to insure church buildings, office property, and our homes. While the Testimony has spoken against life insurance, there has been no such word against insuring property. By reference to chapter twenty-one of this book it will be seen that the very point stated in the first article Elder White wrote upon legal organization, was to be in a position that we might insure church property. The man who first wrote against it, mentioned in *Testimonies for the Church 1:210, 212*, claimed that property owned by the Lord's people, property dedicated to him, the Lord would care for. The Testimony fully condemned his course, and said that he "left to the Lord what the Lord had left him to care for."*COOD 169.4*

The brother saw clearly the error of his position after refusing to

take legal steps to show his right to his home farm of which there had been “peaceable possession” for twenty-one years. Instead of appearing in court to oppose a bogus claim, dating back of his title, he “left it to the Lord,” and lost his home.*COOD 169.5*

Q.-In the absence of a minister what is the proper manner of conducting the church service?*COOD 170.1*

A.-There should certainly be the avoidance of any stereotyped, formal manner that would run things into a special rut. The “Testimonies for the Church” give much excellent instruction on that point. As samples of this, see *Vol.II, pages 419, 420, 577-579*; *Vol. IV, page 461*; *Vol. V, page 609*, etc.*COOD 170.2*

Q.-Is it proper for a minister to encourage the people in paying the tithe to him, instead of paying it through the proper channel? Would not such a course tend, in a short time, to break down organization?*COOD 170.3*

A.-The Bible instruction on this subject is very plain: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.” *Malachi 3:10*. In Nehemiah’s time there was a withholding of the tithes, and as a result the ministers of the Lord had “fled everyone to his field,” laboring to support themselves. The Lord admonished the people to bring in their tithes into the treasury. Treasurers were appointed to receive the tithes, and as the instruction was heeded, the work flourished again. *Nehemiah 13:10-14*.*COOD 170.4*

The conference regulation is for the tithe to be paid to the church treasurer, who gives a receipt for the same. The treasurer sends it on to the conference treasurer, and receives his receipt. Then the money is paid out on order from the conference president and secretary. The accounts of ministers are audited, and also the conference treasurer’s account. Thus it can be known by the church just how the tithe is used. In case any choose to pay their tithe to one whose account is not audited by the conference, they know not how much he may be receiving or accumulating. Some of our conferences have passed resolutions against ministers receiving tithes from churches, or individuals, and directing them to have all their dealings in this respect directly form the conference, and through the regular channels.*COOD 170.5*

Q.-Should a local elder officiate in baptizing believers?*COOD 171.1*

A.-In the address on organization, while reference was made to the local elder baptizing, it was not supposed that would be done by him when a minister could be secured to officiate, but rather that it related to extreme cases, when it was desirable that the ordinance should be administered, and a minister could not be readily secured.*COOD 171.2*

Q.-In case the conference committee, in arranging for quarterly meetings and the ordinances, request the ordained elder of the church to visit another church, would it be proper for him to officiate in the communion service?*COOD 171.3*

A.-If the request for his attendance at the other church was in harmony with the mind of that church, it has been decided by conference action that it would be his province to officiate.*COOD 171.4*

Q.-Is it proper for a deacon in the church to officiate as the the leader in a communion service, breaking the bread, etc.?*COOD 171.5*

A.-No; because his duties pertain to the temporalities of the church. The deacons may, however, be requested to assist in passing the emblems.*COOD 171.6*

Q.-If a person who has been ordained to the ministry, on account of misdemeanor fails to have his credentials renewed by the conference, is he, in that condition, authorized to baptize, officiate at communion, and perform the marriage ceremony?*COOD 171.7*

A.-He is not by the church considered as having any authority to thus officiate. As to the marriage ceremony, he is not legally authorized to perform that ceremony. This was tested in a case, not long since, in one of the Stats. A minister without credentials from his conference performed a marriage ceremony, the parties not knowing but that he had credentials. On learning, after a lapse of time, that he had no credentials, they wished for some one lawfully authorized to remarry them. The case was referred to the judge of the court. He declared that this minister had no right to perform the

ceremony. But as the action on the part of the contracting parties was sincere, the minister was not prosecuted. Surely if a minister in such a condition had lost his right to marry, he would have no right to perform the other duties specified in his credentials.*COOD 171.8*

Q.-When a minister, approved by the conference come to visit a church, is it his privilege to officiate in matters of the church that he sees need attention, or is the authority of the local elder supreme?*COOD 172.1*

A.-As will be seen by reference to the conference address (see Chapter XXIV). one ordained to a higher position is fully authorized to serve in any of the lower offices. If an evangelist, he may serve as elder, or even in the deacon's duties. This, of course, he would not do without counsel with the officers of the church. And on the other hand, it is expected that the officers of the church will deem it a privilege to have counsel and help of an evangelist, or minister, who may visit them, and not look upon him as infringing upon their rights.*COOD 172.2*

Q.-Is it proper to deed church buildings to a conference or general association?*COOD 172.3*

A.-This has been done in many States. Thus doing, the church avoids the ofttime perplexing matter of getting a quorum of the members together annually to elect trustees. Let it be borne in mind, however, that such deed is only "in trust," and that the corporation to whom it is deeded is not responsible for any expenses, such as repairs, insurance, taxes, etc. Some of our conferences have voted requesting the churches to deed their buildings to the corporation.*COOD 172.4*

Q.-If a person has been ordained as elder or deacon in one church and removes to another church, is he authorized to officiate in that church without some action of that church approving of his thus acting?*COOD 172.5*

A.-The position taken in this matter in some of the earlier general conferences was this, that before such a one could act in that capacity in the second church, it would require the vote of that church to fill the said office; but that in the matter of ordination, if he

had been faithful to his church covenant, he need not be re-ordained.*COOD 173.1*

Q.-Is an ordained local elder authorized to perform the marriage ceremony?*COOD 173.2*

A.-This matter was acted upon in one of the past General Conferences. It was found that, in some of the States it was legal for even a local elder to perform the ceremony, while in other States it was not, and the law specified who might perform the ceremony. To save any difficulty in the matter it was given as the opinion of the conference that they did not encourage local elders performing the marriage ceremony. So it has not been customary for our local elders to thus officiate.*COOD 173.3*

Q.-Would it be proper for one who has been ordained as elder of a local church, but has not been re-elected, to take the lead in the breaking of bread?*COOD 173.4*

A.-If he has been ordained as elder of a church, and has been faithful in his church duties, although removed to another church, it might be proper for him to officiate if requested to do so by vote of the church.*COOD 173.5*

Q.-If a minister in good standing visits a church, believing he has a message for the church, should not the local elder give way for the minister?*COOD 173.6*

A.-The answer to this question may really be found in the the answer to the fourth question preceding this one.*COOD 173.7*

## APPENDIX

THE following form of organization, and questions used in organizing the North-side Swedish church in Chicago, has been considered by some of the General Conference Committee as a suggestive form of questioning to be used in organizing a church, and so we introduce it here.*COOD 174.1*

After speaking a few minutes concerning the principles of Seventh-day Adventists, the elder said he would take three persons who were desirous of entering into church fellowship, and question them closely concerning the principles to be recognized in entering into church fellowship, and he desired all the others who wished to enter into the organization to note closely every point, for as they should present their names they would be asked if they endorsed these principles, without, on this occasion, asking each one the separate questions. Three persons were then selected to be questioned, who were to constitute the nucleus, or beginning of the church organization.*COOD 174.2*

The elder then said, “Instead of forming a creed in which is expressed every item of our faith, those entering into church fellowship attach their names to a church covenant which reads as follows: ‘We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together as a church, taking the name Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ.’ In a covenant of this character we endorse the entire Bible as a rule of faith, and leave room for the Spirit of God to enlighten us in regard to the truths of his Word, not being bound down by any creed.”*COOD 174.3*

The following questions were asked the three candidates for membership, who answered each question heartily in the affirmative:-*COOD 174.4*

1. Do you accept the Bible as the rule of your faith and practise?*COOD 175.1*

2. Will you study to learn the truths of the Word, and practise those truths in your lives?*COOD 175.2*

3. Do you understand the doctrines taught by the Seventh-day Adventists, and do you believe them?*COOD 175.3*

4. Have you confessed your sins to God as far as they have been made known to you, and have you on your part, as far as in you lies, tried to make matters right with your fellow men?*COOD 175.4*

5. Do you claim by faith in Christ that God for Christ's sake has forgiven our past sins, and that he is yours, and you are his?*COOD 175.5*

6. Do you recognize the fact that as truly as God claims the seventh part of time as his, so he claims one tenth of all our income as his for the support of his work in advancing the glorious gospel of Christ, and will you faithfully render to his his own-the tithe?*COOD 175.6*

7. Will you submit to the decisions of the body of the church in matters of church discipline? In other words, will you seek the peace, harmony, and unity of the church, rather than press an individual opinion to cause confusion in the church, which is in harmony with Volume V of the "Testimonies," page 107?*COOD 175.7*

8. Will you besides this contribute of your substance as God may prosper you, for the upbuilding of the various branches of his cause?*COOD 175.8*

9. Will you seek to build up the interests of the church by attendance upon its meetings, ordinances, and adding your influence to extend its work, while the church, on their part, exercise their watch-care over you?*COOD 175.9*

10. Do you understand the principles of Christian temperance as taught by the Seventh-day Adventists, and will you carry out those principles, abstaining from the use of liquors, tobacco in all its forms, coffee, tea, and swine's flesh? In short, will you truly study the subject of Bible temperance, and practise it in your life?*COOD 175.10*

11. In the matter of dress will you follow the Bible rule of plainness

of dress (*1 Timothy 2:9, 10*; *1 Peter 3:3, 4*), abstaining from plumes, feathers, banging the hair, and the wearing of gold as ornaments, and "costly array," as taught it Volume VI, page 97?*COOD 176.1*

12. Do you believe the Bible doctrine of "Spiritual Gifts," and do you understand the nature of the gift of prophesy which has been manifested through Sister E. G. White, and which has been connected with the message from its very commencement? And as far as you understand the instructions from that source, are in harmony with them?*COOD 176.2*

13. You of course recognize all ten of the commandments as spoken from the Lord from Mount Sinai as still binding, and by God's grace will you keep those commandments, the fourth with the rest, rendering to the Lord as his sacred time the seventh day, by the world called Saturday?*COOD 176.3*

14. By submission to Christ and his grace, will you seek to grow in grace as well as in the knowledge of his truth?*COOD 176.4*

15. Have you been immersed (baptized) in the likeness of Christ's death, and so now walk in the new life, having been raised to the likeness of his resurrection?*COOD 176.5*

16. Are you three in Christian fellowship with each other, and do you each by uplifted hand accept the other to constitute the nucleus of this church?*COOD 176.6*

At this point each of the three persons were voted upon by the others, and were then declared a church, ready to receive other members. The others one by one were asked to endorse the questions which had been propounded, and were voted in by the first three and others who were accepted.*COOD 176.7*